THE METHODIST MINISTRY TO AMERICAN MILITARY PERSONNEL TO 1900

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ABSTRACT

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Throughout their history, the Methodists have sought to minister to and meet the spiritual needs of military personnel. This effort began in England and spread to North America in both Canada and Colonial America. In the Revolutionary War, this form of ministry was informal and the Methodists did not serve officially as chaplains. However, they did make some effort to minister to the military personnel.

Later, this ministry to soldiers and sailors expanded until it reached sizeable proportions during the Civil War. Forms of ministry varied but their effect was noticeable in both Federal and Confederate units. The effort to trace these ministries and examine their scope and form is an interesting project that unveils deep commitment, creative effort and a depth of sacrifice. The Methodist ministry to military personnel is traced from its origin in England to the twentieth century.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1	Methodism's English Background	p. 1
Chapter 2	Methodism in Early America	p. 17
Chapter 3	Ministry to Federal Forces in the Civil War	p. 47
Chapter 4	The Methodist Ministry to Confederate Forces	p. 87
Epilogue		p. 116
Bibliography		p. 123

Chapter 1

METHODISM'S ENGLISH BACKGROUND

Methodism began in England with the work of John and Charles Wesley in the eighteenth century. Deep religious commitment, strict moral discipline, and effective organization combined to make this rapidly growing religious group an effective instrument of reform in England, the British Isles, and later America. Methodism was at first a reform and renewal movement within the Church of England. Toward the end of the century, it separated and became The Methodist Church.

John (1703-1791) and Charles (1708-1788) Wesley were Anglican clergymen in an age of religious turmoil. After an unsuccessful pastoral assignment to Georgia, they returned to England and were soon caught up in a revival that had been sweeping across Europe. In England, three branches of revivalism which would later separate were closely intertwined at this time. One was Calvinism, which in its evangelical form was led by George Whitefield. Another was the Moravian branch which consistently stood for separation from the Anglican Church. The third was Arminianism, in which the Wesleys are included. All were pietistic groups and highly evangelical in their approach with strong stress on "felt" or "experienced" religious faith.

Actually, "Methodist" is a term which predates Wesley, although it was applied to him and other members of the Holy Club from their days at Oxford. The first group to use the term officially was the Welsh Calvinist Methodist Conference organized at Waterford on

January 5, 1743, a year and a half before Wesley convened his first conference in 1744.[1] Nonetheless, the term and the Wesleys soon became practically inseparable.

Methodism began as a movement within the Church of England rather than as a separate Church. Significantly, it developed in response to a felt inadequacy of established ministeries by the Church of England. While part of the Holy Club of Oxford, the Wesleys and other early Methodists had sought to reach out in Christian service to the "outcasts" of society and had pioneered in ministering to men in prison. They sought to reach those who for an assortment of reasons were ignored by the parish priests. The groups in question included the poor, improvished children, social outcasts, and common laborers who were, for the most part, outside the concern and interest of the Church.

From its earliest days, Methodism consequently focused on the needs of the common people. However, the movement did not seek to replace the established Church. Both John and Charles Wesley were Anglican clergymen and believed strongly in the sacraments of the Church. For the most part, the Methodist work was to be an essential augmentation to the work of the local parish. Those who were active in the movement were strongly admonished to participate in and support their local parish.

The Methodist Movement contained several significant features. First, it used lay speakers or preachers who greatly extended the

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[1] Emory Stevens Bucke (ed.), The History of American Methodism (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1964), 1, 15.

ministry and contact points of the group. Second, it went beyond the confines of the church buildings. George Whitefield was the innovator of field preaching which became increasingly necessary as hostility within the established Church grew. Such hostility is far from surprising for, as the historian William Lecky comments:

> The Methodist preacher came to an Anglican parish in the spirit, and with the language, of a missionary going to the most ignorant heathens; and asked the clergyman of the parish to lend him his pulpit in order that he might instruct the parishioners--perhaps for the first time--in the true gospel of Christ.[2]

Third, a significant feature of the Methodist Movement was its highly structured and effective form of organization. The people were organized into "Societies" with smaller groupings called "Bands." The larger groups were part of a "Circuit" covered by an itinerant preacher and all his Circuits were combined into a "Charge." These, in turn, were part of the "Conference" over which Wesley presided. Fourth, the movements had an itinerate or "traveling" ministry. The Methodist preacher moved constantly. When he could no longer move due to ill health or some other reason, he was "located," a term indicating his removal from the normal traveling ministry. Finally, the evangelical proclamation and resulting stress on Christian morality were two features of the Methodist Movement which, while not unique, were uniformly characteristic of these people.

The trip by John and Charles Wesley to the Colony of Georgia was important in the early development of the Methodist movement's

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[2] Quoted in Umphrey Lee and William Warren Sweet, A Short History of Methodism (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956), 17.

ministry within the military. The Wesleys embarked aboard the Simmonds on October 14, 1735, and arrived in February, 1736.[3] Charles Wesley came as the secretary to General James Oglethorpe while John Wesley was to serve as both chaplain to the colony and as a missionary to the Indians. The colony served as a refuge for debtors in lieu of prison, and the Wesley family had warmly supported General Oglethorpe in the entire venture.

Several years before on August 3, 1732, John Wesley had joined the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, an organization deeply concerned with social issues such as prison reform and missionary outreach.[4] This organization handled the task of furnishing a chaplain for Georgia. The first one had been Henry Herbert who died shortly after his arrival. His successor, Samuel Quincey, had not been successful and the Society decided to terminate his contract.[5]

The effort was an unsuccessful venture for both Wesleys. Charles Wesley was incompetent as a secretary and disastrous as the pastor of Frederica.[6] He resigned his position on July 25, 1736, returning to England on December 3, 1736.[7] John Wesley was unsuited

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[3] V. H. H. Green, The Young Mr. Wesley: A Study of John Wesley and Oxford (London: Edward Arnold Publishers, Ltd., 1961), 255.

[4] Ibid., 252.

[5] Ibid., 253.

[6] V. H. H. Green, John Wesley (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 1964), 44.

[7] Frederick C. Gill, Charles Wesley: The First Methodist (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1964), 56.

for his new form of ministry and his new congregation. His pastoral duties became unmanageable when a romantic involvement and subsequent legal action began. On December 2, 1737, he sailed from Charlestown for England and arrived at Deal on February 1, 1738.[8] The work of John Wesley as a chaplain had been brief and less than successful. While this did not serve as a precedent for later involvement by Methodist ministers as military chaplains, it was noteworthy that the two founders did participate in this form of ministry.

Another factor not to be overlooked concerns the ancestry of the Wesleys. Their paternal grandfather was John Westley (1636-1670), a well-known and respected Puritan. Upon completion of his schooling at Oxford, "he became associated with a 'gathered church' at Melcombe Regis preaching in the area and serving as a port chaplain."[9] Later, he sought unsuccessfully to prevent his ejection under the Act of Uniformity by pointing to the fruits of his work while preaching at "Radipole, Melcombe, Turnworth, Whitchurch, and at sea."[10]

The Wesley's maternal grandfather was Samuel Annesley, one of the most eminent of the later Puritan Nonconformists. He was ordained as a Presbyterian clergyman in 1644 and began his career as a naval chaplain.[11] These two grandfathers may have had some influence

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[8] Green, John Wesley, 50.

[9] Robert C. Monk, John Wesley: His Puritan Heritage, A Study of the Christian Life (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966), 18-19.

[10] Ibid., 19.

[11] Ibid., 20.

on John and Charles Wesley in terms of their later service in Georgia but such a conclusion remains speculative.

On May 24, 1738, John Wesley reported a type of conversion experience while attending a meeting in London. The following year in April, John Wesley began preaching in the fields around Bristol at the insistence of George Whitefield.[12] The evangelical movement now had a new champion and the Methodist Movement began to flourish. Growth was rapid and organization was essential. Wesley called together the Methodist leaders for their first Conference session. The first Conference met in London, June 25-29, 1744.[13]

In 1744, England was engaged in the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748), during which her main opponent was France. In light of this, John Wesley considered sending a Humble Address to the King from the Methodist Societies to affirm their loyalty at the time of a threatened French invasion. He was dissuaded by Charles Wesley who feared that such a statement might indicate that the Methodists had separated from the national Church.[14] At the same time, the war and related issues hung in the air.

The preceeding spring, John Nelson, a Methodist lay preacher, had been impressed into the Army. However, he became Methodism's

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[12] Green, John Wesley, 61, 73.

[13] Albert C. Outler (ed.), John Wesley (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 134ff.

[14] Gill, Charles Wesley: The First Methodist, 116.

first conscientious objector by refusing to bear arms. At his subsequent court martial at York, he stated,

> I shall not fight; for I cannot bow my knee before the Lord, to pray for a man and get up and kill him when I have done: for I know God both hears me speak and sees me act; and I should expect the lot of the hypocrite, if my actions contradict my prayers.[15]

Nelson held his position firmly and was later released at the intercession of an Earl.[16] This action and Nelson's later sufferings at the hands of several mobs no doubt dramatically sensitized Wesley to the war issue.

At the Conference in 1744, according to The Bennett Minutes of the First Conference, the question was raised, "Is it lawful to bear arms?" The discussion is omitted but the answer was affirmative:

> We incline to think it is: 1. Because there is no command against it in the New Testament; 2. Because Cornelius, a soldier, is commanded there, and not mentioned to have laid them down.[17]

John Wesley made an early reference to war in a work entitled The Doctrine of Original Sin:

> . . . Now, who can reconcile war, I will not say to

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[15] Extract from the Journal of John Nelson . . . to which is Added an Account of His Death (16th ed., New York: Carlton and Porter, 1856), 124-25, as quoted in Richard M. Cameron, Methodism and Society in Historical Perspective (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1961), 55.

[16] Ibid., 55.

[17] The Bennett Minutes of the First Conference (1744) as quoted in Richard M. Cameron, The Rise of Methodism: A Source Book (New York: Philosophical Library, 1954), 360.

religion, but to any degree of reason or common sense?

. . . . . .

> And surely all our declarations on the strength of human reason, and the eminence of our virtues, are no more than the cant or jargon on pride and ignorance, so long as there is such a thing as war in the world. Men in general can never be allowed to be reasonable creatures, till they know not war any more. So long as this monster stalks uncontrolled, where is reason, virtue, humanity? They are utterly excluded; they have no place; they are a name, and nothing more.[18]

Actually, war as a moral subject does not often appear in the writings of John Wesley. However, in the early days of Methodism, when persecution was severe and frequent, the "press gangs" regarded the Methodists, especially the preachers, as outside the protection of the authorities. The Methodists were thus fair game for involuntary recruitment into the armed forces. Many of them then organized services in the garrisons and camps to which they were sent. Wesley seems to have been proud of their fidelity to the faith as well as their satisfactory performances within the military.[19] According to Abel Stevens, "Wesley advised the Methodists to learn the military exercise that they might better defend their country when the French threatened to invade it in 1756."[20]

There is continuing evidence of British Methodists serving in the military forces and organizing groups for prayers, study,

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[18] As quoted in Philip S. Watson (comp.), The Message of the Wesleys: A Reader of Instruction and Devotion (New York: Macmillan Co., 1964), 102-03.

[19] Cameron, Methodism and Society in Historical Perspective, 54.

[20] Abel Stevens, History of the Methodist Episcopal Church (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1864), I, 428, as quoted in William H. Bernhardt, "Was John Wesley a Pacifist?," The Methodist Review, CVIII (July, 1925), 455.

and worship. One of the soldiers in the War of Austrian Succession was John Haime, a lay preacher who served as a regular soldier in the Queen's regiment of dragoons. He speaks of a "lively society" among the troops and of his difficulties in gaining permission to use a nearby "English Church" for preaching services. Haime declared that General Sinclair "was very angry, and told me I should not preach or pray anywhere but in the barracks."[21]

However, General Sinclair was later replaced by General Ponsonby who granted his permission. Then, Haime could not get the building as "the Chaplains forbade it." The chaplains in the British Army at this time were Church of England ministers and no doubt viewed Haime as an unorthodox trouble maker. Haime, however, persisted and the General gave a direct order that Haime should use the church for services. Later, due to casualties in the battle at Fontenoy on May 1, 1745, this Methodist Society was disrupted. Their numbers were depleted and several of those who remained "fell into Antinomianism." Haime continued to have controversy with the Army chaplains. He complained to the Duke of Cumberland about their failure to administer the sacraments frequently. The Duke of Cumberland promptly "ordered that it should be administered every Lord's day, to one regiment or the other."[22]

Still later, Haime expressed a viewpoint that has continued

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[21] Thomas Jackson (ed.), The Lives of Early Methodist Preachers Chiefly Written By Themselves (London: John Mason, Pub., 1846), I, 104, 115.

[22] Ibid., I, 115-17.

to disturb students of the Church's work in the military both because of its persistence and because of its implications, The Duke of Cumberland attended one of Haime's services in which Haime said:

> You fight for a good cause, and for a good King, and in defence (sic) of your country. And this is no way contrary to the tenderest conscience, as many of you found at the battle of Fontenoy; when both you and I did our duty and were all the time filled with love, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.[23]

While John Nelson would certainly have disagreed, Haime did speak for a sizable portion of the Methodists. Haime returned to England and, following his discharge from the Army, became a "Travelling Preacher" with the Methodists.

In 1754 Duncan Wright enlisted into the Tenth Regiment of Foot and concluded, "I could form no conception how a soldier could be religious."[24] While serving at various places in England and Ireland, this young soldier came to know Methodists and was impressed by their religious faith and life. In September, 1758, Wright prayed with a deserter prior to his execution in Limerick. Later, he invited other soldiers to join him in the evenings and "I would sing, read, and pray with them as well as I could . . . and in a little while I had a class of them."[25]

In 1764 Wright was on a campaign in northern Ireland but was having trouble with his commander who "thought it a disgrace to have a Serjeant (sic) a Preacher among them." Wright noted that

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[23] Ibid., I, 118.

[24] Ibid., I, 173.

[25] Ibid., I, 176-77.

"Our Lieutenant-Colonel did not care what a soldier's religion was, provided he did his duty. . . ." Reflecting on the officers' viewpoints, he concluded, "Some of them, indeed, wished I could persuade all their men to be religious, for they had no trouble with the Methodist soldiers, but enough with the others."[26]

While Wright did not report any trouble with Army Chaplains before his discharge in 1764 to become a Travelling Preacher, he did hold them in low esteem.

> Were the Chaplains men of real piety and courage, much good might be done in the army; but the chaplaincy is generally a kind of sinecure, and the care of souls is left to any worthless wretch that will do it at an easy rate. When we lay in one city, the care of four or five regiments was left to an unhappy man, who was an object of common ridicule among the soldiers, for his perpetual drunkenness.[27]

Thomas Payne was another Methodist preacher who was also a soldier. He served in the Fifteenth Regiment of Foot where he complained that "I do not know that we had three men in the whole regiment who pretended to any religion at all."[28] Later, at Leeds, in Yorkshire, he ignored a threat of trial by court-martial if he preached and conducted services in the area. To his pleasant surprise, he was not punished but given greater liberty for religious work both among the troops and various Methodist groups in the nearby community.[29]

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[26] Ibid., I, 181.

[27] Ibid., I, 182.

[28] Ibid., I, 248.

[29] Ibid., I, 249.

Sampson Staniforth, a Methodist preacher, related how Methodist work in the English army was informally co-ordinated. In camps the Methodists would gather and form a congregation. In the units they had the smaller classes or societies which were quite active. "As soon as our regiment was settled at Ghent, we hired two rooms: one for the preaching, and one for private meetings; for, when off duty, we met twice a day . . . for preaching, prayer, or to tell our experience to each other."[30] The work went on wherever the units went and an effort was made to involve as many of the soldiers or local citizens as would respond.

Another Methodist preacher, Thomas Rankin, related how he as a local inhabitant was reached by Methodist soldiers. About 1755, a troop of Dragoons came to Dunbar where Rankin lived. The Methodist soldiers "hired a room, and met together for prayer and hearing the work of God every morning and evening . . . those men were part of the religious soldiers who used to meet with John Haime, and others, in Germany."[31] These groups reached out to civilians as well as soldiers in their ministry.

They also sought to reach military units in different armies. John Haime spoke of a group which tried unsuccessfully to organize in the Hanoverian army. They did hold several meetings. "They were quickly ordered to meet no more. They were very unwilling to desist. But some of them being severly punished, the rest did not

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[30] Ibid., I, 430-31.

[31] Ibid., II, 141.

dare to disobey." Haime saw this as the work of both the devil and the world who will "suffer a man to be anything but a real Christian."[32]

The memoirs of Alfred Laverack revealed one further look at Methodist involvement in the English army. Laverack was a career soldier and a dedicated Methodist who had served in India during the middle of the nineteenth century. He told of experiences quite similar to those of his predecessors a century before -- Bible study, prayer meetings, societies and classes of soldiers, and strenuous evangelical outreach. He mentioned a "Soldiers' Chapel" which the men had built and also he refered to services held in mess tents, ravines, and even in the Freemason's Hall. He also stated that he "had an offer of a situation as Scripture reader to the 24th regiment," but turned it down as he would have had to shift to a different position and unit.[33] This was a new form of religious ministry available to British troops at that time.

The Methodist work within the military forces was in a real way reminiscent of developments during the Puritan Revolution in the mid-seventeenth century. In the Parliamentary forces under Oliver Cromwell there was a great deal of lay preaching by members of the Independents and the Sectarians. Despite an order by Parliament in 1645 directing Lord Fairfax to discipline all violators, the

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[32] Ibid., I, 114.

[33] Alfred Laverack, A Methodist Soldier in the Indian Army: His Personal Adventures and Christian Experience (4th ed.; London: T. Woolmer, n. d.), 110, 114, 116, 131.

practice continued.[34] Lay ministry thus held a position in English military history that provided a precedent for the type of work later done by the Methodists.

The records dealing with Methodist work among Navy personnel are far more limited than those dealing with land forces. That such work was carried on, however, is attested to by an early student of the ministry to seamen:

> The first religious meeting, composed entirely of sailors, that I ever heard of, was on board a Collier brig upon the river Thames. A Mr. R___ obtained leave to hold similar meetings, in two or three other ships, upon the same river. He then invited a Methodist minister to preach on board a ship, whose commander had granted permission. This novel experiment of preaching afloat attracted great attention; and so deep an interest was excited, that the minister immediately established a class meeting among the sailors, and evening meetings on board ship multiplied rapidly, and were fully attended.[35]

The early Methodists were very active in their forms of religious worship and devotion. They were also extremely evangelistic and sought with fervor to convert all who would respond to the Christian Gospel message and involve them in a highly disciplined way of life. At the same time, John Wesley, a man noted for his administrative ability, organized the Methodist people into tightly-knit and controlled structures over which he presided. His political viewpoint loomed increasingly significant as the eighteenth century moved toward and into its final quarter.

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[34] William J. Hughes, "The Military Chaplaincy In England: 1640-1660," The Chaplain, XXIX (Fall, 1972), 12.

[35] Anon., The Naval Chaplain: Exhibiting a View of American Efforts to Benefit Seamen (Boston: T. R. Marvin, 1831), 31-32.

John Wesley was a Tory. He had been wellborn, had been reared in the home of a rector of the Church of England, and had been educated at Oxford. He inherited the idea that authority was vested in superior character rather than in superior position.[36] In 1736 he had affirmed that "the majority of people are not the wisest or best part."[37] In 1745 he stoutly opposed Bonnie Prince Charlie and despite the restraint advised by Charles Wesley, "He offered to raise a company of volunteers to fight the French in the Seven Years War and to support it from Methodist funds."[38] The Church-State issues such an action would have raised are staggering to contemplate but it does show the depth of Wesley's loyalty to the King.

According to McConnell, Wesley judged many issues "almost entirely from the personal character of the leaders."[39] Since George III was a man of prayers and repeatedly showed royal favor to the Methodists, John Wesley was firmly loyal to him. "In 1775 he wrote that he was in danger of losing his love for the Americans because of their miserable leaders."[40] While he did write Lord Dartmouth on the eve of the rebellion "recommending a conciliatory attitude," once the warfare broke out, his sympathies were with the Crown and against the colonists.

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[36] Francis J. McConnell, John Wesley (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1939), 256.

[37] As quoted in ibid., 257.

[38] Green, John Wesley, 153.

[39] McConnell, John Wesley, 258.

[40] Ibid., 261.

The roots of Methodism reach deeply into eighteenth-century England and even more specifically in the personality, faith and work of John Wesley. Methodism had a later start in America but there, too, its growth was rapid. While its pattern of development in America varied considerably from that in England, the movement played a significant role in the life of the new nation. The efforts of Methodists in ministering to America's military forces would also develop and become increasingly important.

Chapter 2

METHODISM IN EARLY AMERICA

Methodism started in Colonial America through the efforts of lay persons. They were not preachers or missionaries sent by Wesley to begin Methodist work in the Colonies but members of Methodist groups who migrated to America on their own. Following their arrival, they then began to work on their own and soon Methodist groups developed.

Robert Strawbridge came to Maryland between 1760 and 1766 and began Methodist work there and in Virginia. In New York, a Methodist Society began through the efforts of Philip Embury and his cousin, Barbara Heck, who arrived in 1760. The fourth founder was a British soldier, Captain Thomas Webb. He had originally come to America in 1755 with General Braddock's forces but it was not until 1765 that he was converted in England and joined the Methodist movement. The following year he was stationed in Albany and joined Embury and Heck in founding the work in New York.[1]

While Webb was a British soldier and preached in his uniform with a saber across the pulpit, his work was almost exclusively among the civilian community. He is credited with planting Methodism in Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey in addition to his effective work in New York.[2] Webb was a soldier, but he was not a

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[1] Bucke, The History of American Methodism, I, 75, 76, 79.

[2] Ibid., I, 79-80.

chaplain. However, his life demonstrated how some early Methodists ministered in the military community in America.

Methodism came to Canada by means of other Methodists in the British Army. In Wolf's army there was a Methodist society with several lay preachers. One of these lay preachers, Tuffy, began preaching among local English immigrants. His converts who remained in Canada were the first to open their doors to welcome Methodist preachers who later came to Quebec and Upper Canada.[3]

Another example of Methodism's spread into Canada by means of Methodist soldiers in British units concerns the work of James Griggs Peal.

> During his continuance in the army, which was about nine years, he was in the habit of preaching to the soldiers in the barracks and fields; and by his labours, a considerable society was raised up, and continued to associate together for religious worship while he was with them. In 1815 the royal staff corps, to which he was attached, came to Halifax; thence to Coteau-Du Lac, Lower Canada. Application having been made to his excellency the governor, he obtained his discharge from the army, for the purpose of becoming an itinerant preacher in the Canadas.[4]

To realistically estimate the scope of Methodist work begun by lay preachers in the military or among the colonists is difficult. Such work did take place, however, both in Canada and in America. The British troops in America did not have chaplains

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[3] William Warren Sweet, Methodism In American History (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1933), 130.

[4] Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the Years 1773-1828 (New York: T. Mason and G. Lane, 1840), 405. (Hereafter cited as Minutes, 1773-1828.)

assigned with them,[5] but the military did provide one of the bridges over which Methodism came into the New World.

A number of Methodists were present among the British forces in America. In 1771, Richard Boardman was in New Jersey, probably at Trenton.

> He saw a barrack, and inquired of a soldier if any Methodists were there. "Yes, we are all Methodists; that is, would be glad to hear a Methodist preach," was the prompt reply, for Captain Webb had been there, and military men were always proud both of his regimentals and his eloquence.[6]

Instances such as this indicate that Methodism was active within the British forces. However, few records remain as most of these efforts did not result in the establishment of lasting church structures.

Some Methodists in America wrote John Wesley on several occasions asking that preachers be sent to carry on the work which had begun. In 1769, Wesley appealed to the Methodist Conference for volunteers who would go to America. Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor did volunteer and arrived in America on October 20, 1769.[7] Between 1769 and 1774, twelve Methodist preachers came to America to help organize and carry forward the work there. They did this

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[5] Charles H. Metzger, Catholics and the American Revolution (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1962), 215.

[6] Stevens, The History of the Religious Movement of the Eighteenth Century Called Methodism, I, 100, as cited in Bucke, The History of American Methodism, I, 90.

[7] Bucke, The History of American Methodism, I, 81-82.

quite effectively. However, prior to and during the Revolution, eleven of the twelve returned to England. Francis Asbury was the sole exception.[8]

Because they came to America just before the Revolution and were so closely identified with the Church of England, the early Methodists encountered much opposition in America during the war period. In addition, they proclaimed a message of peace and reconciliation when most religious bodies strongly supported the revolution in both word and deed.

Samuel Stone had served as perhaps the first American chaplain and distinguished himself in the Pequot War in 1637.[9] Still later, in the French and Indian War, "there came an outburst of enthusiasm among the clergy."[10] The support and enthusiastic defense of the Revolution was very strong in most religious groups in America. By the fall of 1774, some pastors had already led their parishioners into battle.[11] In sharp contrast to this were the newly arrived and developing Methodist societies where sympathies were

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[8] Thomas O. Summers (ed.), Biographical Sketches of Eminent Itinerant Ministers Distinguished, For the Most Part, As Pioneers of Methodism Within the Bounds of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (Nashville: E. Stevenson and F. A. Owen, 1858), 13. (Hereafter cited as Summers, Biographical Sketches.)

[9] The American Army Chaplaincy: A Brief History, Department of the Army Pamphlet 165-1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1955), 1.

[10] Alice M. Baldwin, The New England Clergy and the American Revolution (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Company, 1928), 86.

[11] Ibid., 162.

strongly divided and there was an earnest, if unpopular, effort to maintain peace.

In the spring of 1775, John Wesley wrote to his American co-workers a letter of earnest counsel.

> My Dear Brethren,---You were never in your lives in so critical a situation as you are at this time. It is your part to be peacemakers: to be loving and tender to all; but to addict yourselves to no party. In spite of all solicitations, of rough or smooth words, say not one word against one or the other side.[12]

Several months later, Wesley wrote Lord North, the Prime Minister, urging reconciliation and avowing his own "passive obedience and non-resistance."[13] Less than six months later, in October of 1775, John Wesley communicated with his brother Charles and shared how his position was shifting. Having read a scathing pamphlet by Dr. Johnson, John Wesley reissued it under his own name as "A Calm Address To Our American Colonies."[14] He sharply attacked the American cause and as a result the Methodist in America encounted a new dimension of persecution and disfavor. Methodist pacifism and Toryism appeared quite similar in many American eyes.

The requirement to take loyalty oaths also plagued Methodists, especially in Maryland. The one in Maryland specifically included a pledge to defend the government and was the one which

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[12] John Wesley, Letters, VI, 142, as cited in Wade Crawford Barclay, History of American Missions (New York: The Board of Missions and Church Extension of The Methodist Church, 1949), I, 45.

[13] John Wesley's letter of June 15, 1775, is cited in Bucke, The History of American Methodism, I, 162-63.

[14] Bucke, The History of American Methodism, I, 163.

ensnarled most Methodists.[15] Maryland was a center of Methodist growth. Those who suffered persecution for refusing the oath of military service continued to face threats of abuse, fines and imprisonment.

Methodists were extremely vulnerable during the war. Their patriarch, John Wesley, was espousing Tory concepts. They depended on the Church of England for the sacraments. Most of their clergy returned to England and some Methodists even fled to Canada because of their religious or political beliefs. Many Methodists were pacifists and opposed all war. Yet, the Methodists remaining in America wanted to be part of the American scene and still retain their relationship to Methodism.

Persecution began quickly. In April, 1775, John Littlejohn, a circuit rider in Ann Arundel County, Maryland, was brought before a local magistrate for not having a pass. The magistrate, a friend of the family, warned him to avoid Methodists as they were Wesley's agents sent out expressly for the purpose of "fighting the revolutionary cause under the shield of passive nonresistance."[16]

In the same year, Freeborn Garrettson refused to meet a muster and subsequently faced a court martial at which he was fined twelve and a half dollars a year.[17] In 1776, the Methodists in

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[15] Ibid., I, 165.

[16] Ibid., I, 165-66.

[17] Nathan Bangs, The Life of Freeborn Garrettson (New York: Emory and Waugh, 1829), 43-44.

Virginia occupied an awkward and unpopular position. The Virginia Assembly debated a proposal to repeal all laws favoring any religious institution. George Shadford presented a petition signed by three thousand Methodists opposing disestablishment and stated that Methodists wished to disassociate themselves from "common descenters." In 1779, Methodists joined the Baptists and others to help pass Jefferson's Bill for the Establishment of Religious Liberty in Virginia. In the meantime, hostility against them continued.[18]

The laws regarding exemption of clergy from military service or pertaining to the status of conscientious objectors varied from colony to colony. As the war progressed, these laws often changed as did the requirements for oaths and loyalty tests.[19] Maryland remained a trouble spot for Methodists. In 1777 the British landed at Chesapeake Bay and military officials needed manpower desperately.

One group, including some Methodists, refused to take part in the war even after they had mustered. At this point, Martin Rodda, a Methodist preacher, encouraged them not to fight but to accept the amnesty offered by General Howe. The Americans arrested

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[18] Wade Crawford Barclay, History of American Missions (New York: The Board of Missions and Church Extensions of the Methodist Church, 1949), I, 49-50. (Hereafter cited as Barclay, History of American Missions.)

[19] See for example, Reba Carolyn Strickland, Religion and the State in Georgia in the Eighteenth Century (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), 122ff, 175.

Rodda but he escaped and fled to the British Navy.[20] Soon thereafter, Thomas Rankin went to the British for custody and returned to England. This left Francis Asbury as the only preacher, sent by Wesley to America prior to the war, who still remained in America. Asbury himself had to flee from Maryland and remained in hiding in Delaware from 1778 to 1780.[21]

The persecutions continued as the war moved South. Littlejohn and Garrettson were arrested and fined or imprisoned several times. Captain Webb, not surprisingly as he was a British officer, was imprisoned for fifteen months before returning to England in 1778. Philip Gatch was tarred in Maryland. Joseph Hartley was imprisoned several times. Garrettson suffered several severe beatings in 1778.[22] In October of 1778 alone, about forty prominent Methodist preachers and laymen were tried on charges of refusing to take the oath. Nearly all of them were convicted and had to pay heavy fines.

Jesse Lee's experience at the beginning of his ministry fitted into the role of a non-combatant as opposed to a conscientious objector. North Carolina drafted its militia in 1780. Lee refused to accept a weapon and was jailed. He preached to the troops that same evening from his cell window. The next day Lee met with the Colonel in command of the unit.

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[20] Richard K. MacMaster, "Methodists and War-Resistance in the Revolutionary War," The Christian Advocate, XVIII(April 12, 1973), 10.

[21] Frederick E. Maser, The Dramatic Story of Early American Methodism (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1965), 78.

[22] Bucke, The History of American Methodism, I, 166-67.

> I told him I could not kill a man with a good conscience; but I was a friend to my country, and was willing to do anything I could, while I continued in the army, except fighting.[23]

Lee then became a teamster and drove the baggage wagon while also serving as an unofficial chaplain to his unit. He was later promoted to the rank of Sergeant.[24]

Ambivalence on the war issue characterized the Methodists, however. One Methodist, Richard Dalham, commanded a regiment as a colonel in Maryland forces in 1776. Francis Asbury wrote him an understanding and supportive letter concerning his chosen course of action.[25] The unit which Jesse Lee joined also had other Methodists serving in it.[26] Jesse Hollingsworth strongly supported the revolution although he later fell afoul of the oath in Maryland.[27]

Some Methodists benefitted from the presence of the British forces. In New York City many of the churches closed or were converted into barracks. However, the John Street Church prospered and the public collections greatly increased. "The British Officers attended as well as soldiers, and no doubt contributed most liberally,

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23 Leroy M. Lee, The Life and Times of the Rev. Jesse Lee (Richmond: John Early, 1848), 90-91.

24 Ibid., 92.

25 MacMaster, "Methodists And War-Resistance," 9.

26 Lee, The Life and Times of the Rev. Jesse Lee, 91.

27 MacMaster, "Methodists and War-Resistance," 10.

and this enlarged the collections."[28] At this church the congregation and the contributions during the war far exceeded those either before or after it.

One step the Methodists took to express their concern involved designating Fast Days, special days for fasting with services held for a specific theme or purpose. In 1775 they appointed "A general fast for the prosperity of the work, and for the peace of America." Similar provisions came in 1776, 1777 and 1778.[29] Then, in 1783, they designated the first Thursdays in July and October in response to the question, "How many days of Thanksgiving shall we have for our public peace, temporal and spiritual prosperity, and for the glorious work of God?"[30]

As the Revolutionary War ended, the role of the Methodists was not of major consequence in reference to the military. Their ministry was active on a small scale among both American and British forces but their main task was one of survival and of getting established in America as a permanent religious institution. As a small, controversial group, they evoked animosity in various areas and suffered persecution accordingly. They had grown as a group

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[28] J. B. Wakeley, Lost Chapters Recovered From the Early History of American Methodism (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1858), 287.

[29] Minutes, 1773-1828, as quoted in Leigh K. Bones, "The Attitude of the Methodist Church Toward War" (unpublished B. D. thesis, Southern Methodist University, 1926), 10-11.

[30] Minutes of the Methodist Conferences Annually Held in America From 1773 to 1794, Inclusive (Philadelphia: Henry Tuckniss, 1795), 63.

despite much disfavor by the public and in 1784 American Methodism included 46 circuits and stations, 83 itinerant preachers and 14,988 members of societies.[31]

The ministry in the military forces, however, had continued to develop and become a generally accepted part of America's military organization and structure. George Washington played a significant role in the development of the chaplaincy in America's military structure. As a military commander both in the French and Indian War and in the Revolutionary War, Washington saw religion as necessary for both the morals and morale of his men.

In 1756 and 1757, Washington wrote to Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia seeking the appointment of chaplains for his troops. He also corresponded during the Revolutionary War on numerous occasions concerning the appointment, pay and assignments of chaplains. His strong perference was for one chaplain, adequately paid, for each regiment of his command.[32] Washington did succeed in raising the salaries of the chaplains but a brigade level of assignment prevailed for the most part throughout the War.

Washington also set forth consistently a moral tone and code for his soldiers. His first General Orders upon assuming command at Cambridge included this paragraph:

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31 General Minutes, I, 20, as quoted in Barclay, History of American Missions, I, 121.

32 P. F. Boller, George Washington and Religion (Dallas: Southern Methodist Univ. Press, 1963) has an extensive discussion of this throughout his book but see 46-54 and 126-28 especially. See also Stewart M. Robinson, "Washington's Discerning Judgement on Chaplains," The Chaplain, VIII(November-December, 1951), 31.

> The General most earnestly requires, and expects, a due observance of those articles of war, established for the Government of the army, which forbid profane cursing, swearing and drunkenness; And in like manner requires & expects, of all Officers, and Soldiers, not engaged on actual duty, a punctual attendance on divine Service, to implore the blessings of heaven upon the means used for our safety and defence (sic).[33]

Washington's support was instrumental in establishing an official chaplaincy in the American forces. The Army chaplaincy dates its official beginning as July 29, 1775, when Congress fixed a chaplain's pay at twenty dollars a month. This is the earliest national legislation known to recognize the chaplaincy in the Army of the United States.[34]

On November 28, 1775, Congress adopted a set of Navy regulations, the second article of which read:

> The commanders of the ships of the thirteen United Colonies, are to take care that divine service be performed twice a day on board, and a sermon preached on Sundays, unless bad weather or other extraordinary accidents prevent.[35]

The moral emphasis of Washington for his Army troops had a parallel provision in the third article of the Navy regulations.

> If any shall be heard to swear, curse or blaspheme the name of God, the Commander is strictly enjoined to punish them for every offence (sic), by causing them to wear a

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[33] General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, July 4, 1775, as quoted in Ralph K. Andrist (ed.), The Founding Fathers: George Washington, A Biography in His Own Words (New York: Newsweek Book Division, 1972), 107-108.

[34] Roy J. Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1958), 37.

[35] Chaplain's Manual (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1959), 1.

> wooden collar, or some other shameful badge of distinction, for so long as he shall judge proper. . . .[36]

The chaplaincy developed effectively during the Revolutionary War. In the Army it began as a disordered system of volunteer preachers but ended with an organized system of brigade chaplains. In addition to these, "the Continental Army had hospital chaplains, a German chaplain at large, a chaplain missionary to the friendly Indians and one division chaplain at Headquarters."[37] All were Protestants except for the Chaplain of a Canadian regiment and a volunteer chaplain in the West, both of whom were Catholic.[38] Two chaplains served in the American Navy, one a Congregationalist while the other's denomination is not known.[39] The Methodists did not furnish any of the official chaplains.

The Methodist work continued to grow in America. A crisis rapidly developed concerning the sacraments of baptism and communion. The preachers in America were lay preachers and not ordained clergy of the Church of England as were John and Charles Wesley. Consequently, the lay preachers could not administer the sacraments and the Methodists had to attend the services of the Church of England in

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[36] Journal of the Continental Congress, III, 378, as quoted in Clifford Merrill Drury, The History of the Chaplain Corps, United States Navy (Washington: Bureau of Naval Personnel, 1969), I, 3.

[37] Donald A. Thompson, "The American Army Chaplaincy," The Army-Navy Chaplain, XVI, July-August, 1945, 30.

[38] Ibid. Also see Metzger, Catholics and the American Revolution, 207.

[39] Drury, The History of the Chaplain Corps, United States Navy, I, 5.

order to receive these. In 1779 the controversy resulted in American Methodism's first division.[40]

John Wesley urged the Bishop of London to ordain men for work in America but without success. To finally meet the critical need for ordained clergy in America, Wesley took two fateful steps. He ordained clergy himself to administer the sacraments and he named Thomas Coke to join Francis Asbury as joint superintendents of the Methodist work in America. He assigned Coke, along with two other clergymen, to America during the Conference at Bristol in 1784. Wesley presented and explained these actions in a letter "To Our Methodist Brethren" which Coke brought to America.[41]

Coke, Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey sailed from Bristol for America on September 18, 1784. Somewhat typically they served as volunteer chaplains on the voyage. They "preached nearly a score of times, distributed tracts among the sailors, and did all they could to bring to Christ the men who sailed with them in the ship."[42]

Arriving in November, 1784, the men began their work. After meeting with Asbury, they announced a Christmas Conference at Baltimore for the American Methodists. This Conference was the real

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[40] Maser, The Dramatic Story of Early American Methodism, 80-81.

[41] The letter is reprinted along with other relevant materials in Albert C. Outler (ed.), John Wesley (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 82-84.

[42] Warren A. Candler, Life of Thomas Coke (Nashville: Publishing House M. E. Church, South, 1923), 54.

organizational beginnings of American Methodism.[43] At this Conference the Methodist preachers adopted their Articles of Religion, Wesley's Orders of Worship, and other plans for their new Church. At this session, the pastors selected Asbury Superintendent and he was subsequently ordained Deacon and Elder and was consecrated as Superintendent (Bishop). Significantly, an article of religion was formulated by the new body which pledged its loyalty and commitment to the new country.[44]

After Asbury and Coke completed rather extensive preaching tours in America, they met again in Alexandria, Virginia, on May 25, 1885. The next day the two Methodist leaders called on George Washington at his home at Mount Vernon to seek his signature on a petition to abolish slavery. Washington expressed his agreement with the concept but declined to sign.[45]

The work of Methodism continued with amazing success. By 1790, the Methodists had grown to be almost four times the size they were in 1784. In 1790 Methodists numbered 227 itinerants with

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[43] An excellent, brief treatment of this meeting is N. C. Hughes, Jr., "The Methodist Christmas Conference: Baltimore, December 24, 1784-January 2, 1785," Maryland Historical Magazine, LIV (September, 1959), 272-92.

[44] The passage of this last article was a deep irritant to many British Methodists, including John Wesley. Candler, Life of Thomas Coke, 73-74.

[45] Ibid., 97-98; William Larkin Duren, Francis Asbury: Founder of American Methodism and Unofficial Minister of State (New York: Macmillan Co., 1928), 45.

nearly 60,000 members.[46] This was roughly one and a half per cent of the entire American population of some 4,000,000 people.[47]

In 1789, Washington was elected President under the new American Constitution and had formed his new government. In May, 1789, the Methodist Conference met in New York and decided to wait upon President Washington and convey the loyal sentiments of the still young Church. Accordingly, on May 29, 1789, Coke and Asbury, accompanied by John Dickens and Thomas Morrell, called upon the new President. The Methodists were the first religious body to take this type action and Washington warmly received them.[48] Coke soon returned to England and suffered the wrath of many British Methodists for participating in this event.[49]

On March 3, 1791, the regular Army chaplaincy had its formal beginning. On that day Congress authorized a second regiment and provided:

> That in case the President of the United States should deem the employment of a major-general, brigadier-general, a quartermaster and chaplain, or either of them, essential to the public interest, that he be and he hereby is empowered,

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[46] Barclay, History of American Missions, I, 121.

[47] Richard B. Morris (ed.), Encyclopedia of American History (New York: Harper Brothers, Publishers, 1953), 442.

[48] Duren, Francis Asbury, 197; for the full texts of the Methodists greetings and Washington's reply, see Candler, Life of Thomas Coke, 139-40.

[49] Candler, Life of Thomas Coke, 141, 212.

by and with the advice of the Senate, to appoint the same accordingly.[50]

The next day, John Hunt, an Episcopalian from Virginia, was appointed. Hunt served until April 30, 1794, when he was replaced by a Baptist, David Jones of Pennsylvania.[51]

In 1796, chaplains were omitted from the Act to Ascertain and Fix the Military Establishment of the United States, but an Act of July 16, 1798, provided for four Army chaplains, each to receive the pay and emoluments of a major. The continuing development of the chaplaincy in the Army from here becomes obscure due partly to the smallness of the Army and, more significantly, to the destruction of its official records in the War of 1812. However, in an Act of April 12, 1808, Congress did authorize brigade chaplains.[52]

In the War of 1812, the number of Army Chaplains serving is unknown. There were seven listed in 1814 and an unknown number of others served with State troops or other forms of militia. The number varied from state to state and the meager existing records make an accurate count impossible. An Act of April 24, 1816, authorized one chaplain for each brigade with pay and emoluments of a major. The same Act provided for a chaplain at the Military Academy who

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[50] Richards Peters (ed.), The Public Statutes At Large of the United States of America, From the Organization of the Government, 1789, to March 3, 1845, 1st Congress, II Session, Statute III, sec. 5, Act of March 3, 1791 (Boston, 1845), I, 222, as quoted in Charles Borromeo Pfab, "American Hospital Chaplains During the Civil War, 1861-1865" (unpublished Master's thesis, Catholic University of America, 1955), 3.

[51] Thompson, "The Army Chaplaincy," 30.

[52] Ibid.

would also teach geography, history and ethics.[53] No further legislation dealt with the Army chaplaincy until 1838.[54]

From 1785 to 1798, America did not have a Navy although the Constitution in 1789 had granted Congress the power to raise one. On March 27, 1794, an "Act to provide a Naval Armament" passed Congress and authorized the building of six frigates. The keels of three were laid and after numerous delays the first one, the Constellation, was launched on September 7, 1797, with the Constitution following the next month.[55]

As America's troubles with France increased, Congress authorized additional ships and on April 30, 1798, Congress established the Navy Department. The Act of 1794 authorized one chaplain for each frigate with pay of forty dollars a month plus two rations a day.[56] William Balch became the first regularly commissioned chaplain in the newly established Navy on October 30, 1799, although William Austin had served already as a chaplain without a commission aboard the Constitution for about a year.[57] "The first discovered reference to 'Divine Service' on any United States ship-of-war is that found in

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53 Honeywell, Chaplains of the U. S. Army, 78-79.

54 Thompson, "The Army Chaplaincy," 31.

55 Drury, History of the Chaplain Corps, U. S. Navy, I, 6.

56 General Regulations of Navy and Marine Corps, 233, as quoted in ibid., I, 8.

57 Ibid., I, 10.

the log of the Constitution for Sunday, 13 January 1799, which may have been Austin's first Sunday aboard."[58]

President Jefferson had a new edition of Naval Regulations issued on January 25, 1802. It contained a new outline of the duties of a chaplain and was a close copy of the current British Articles. The new regulation provided that a chaplain would "read prayers at stated periods; perform all funeral ceremonies" and "perform the duty of a school master. . . ." Only two chaplains, both well known as capable school masters, were on active duty at this time. One of these men, Chaplain Robert Thompson, later conducted an academy for midshipmen in Washington which evolved into the Naval Academy in 1845.[59]

The second decade of the nineteenth century was an important and eventful one for the Navy. In addition to five Navy chaplains on active duty in 1810, forty-one more were appointed or commissioned in this decade. Of these, twenty-three served without any known warrant or commission and the denomination of thirty is unknown.[60] Many captains could and would select a member of their crew to serve as a chaplain. No other official selection procedures had to be followed and it is not known whether any of these thirty were Methodists.

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58 "Log Book of the United States Frigate Constitution, 6 December 1798-20 October 1800," in the Naval History Collection, New York Historical Society, as cited in ibid., I, 11.

59 Ibid., I, 17-21, 30-31.

60 Ibid., I, 24, 255.

From 1821 to 1840, the consistent average number of Navy chaplains remained nine.[61] However, the procedures for selecting qualified and ordained clergymen as chaplains improved considerably. Samuel Southard became Secretary of the Navy on September 16, 1823, and soon issued a directive forbidding the appointment of anyone as a chaplain who was not an ordained clergyman. Some captains continued to follow the old practice of selecting good men from the ship's company to serve as chaplains but this practice finally ended in 1841. The pay of chaplains was also adjusted in 1835 from the original stipends which had been set in 1794.[62]

The first Methodist pastor to serve as a Navy chaplain was William Ryland. Andrew Jackson attended Ryland's services at the Foundry Methodist Church in Washington and also knew him as chaplain of the United States Senate, a position to which Ryland was elected for four terms. When Jackson became President in 1829, he appointed the then fifty-nine-year-old Ryland as chaplain of the Washington Navy Yard. Ryland held this position for thirteen years.[63]

The Navy chaplains during this period were a moving and effective force in several areas of reform. They helped greatly in having flogging curtailed and finally forbidden. They helped in gradually eliminating the daily grog distribution which had led to so many

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61 Army and Navy Chronicle, November 22, 1838, 330, as quoted in ibid., I, 33.

62 The last chaplain appointed from the ship's company was John F. Girard who served on the Potomoc from July 4, 1840 to September 14, 1841. Ibid., I, 43-45.

63 Ibid., I, 46-47.

problems of drunkenness and alcoholism. The chaplains were instrumental in instituting educational reforms. Finally, they assisted the missionary efforts of the churches, while ministering to the local people wherever their travels took them.[64]

A significant development occurred during the brief but highly effective ministry of Vernon Eskridge, a Methodist pastor who was appointed a Navy chaplain in 1851. He served on the United States frigate Cumberland in the Mediterranean Sea. While serving there, some fifteen or twenty of the men and officers "professed their faith in Christ, and a little society was established on shipboard, called 'The Church of Christ.'" The organization of a ship or unit church occurred again in the Civil War. Chaplain Eskridge, while on leave to recuperate from cholerea, died in 1855 while ministering in Portsmouth to sufferers of smallpox.[65]

A controversy arose in the latter part of the 1840's, concerning the chaplaincy, a controversy which lasted into the 1850's and has arisen periodically again from then until the present. The House Judiciary Committee defended the chaplaincy in its report but the criticism continued.[66] A proponent of the chaplaincy, Lorenzo Dow Johnson, both defended the chaplaincy and recommended several quite advanced reforms. Johnson proposed that:

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[64] Ibid., I, 49-56.

[65] William B. Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit (New York: 1857-1869), VII, 736, as quoted in ibid., I, 75.

[66] 31st Congress, 1st Session, House Reports, Vol. I, No. 583, Rep. 171; as quoted in ibid., I, 65.

> There be appointed a Board of Commissioners for government chaplains, composed of some eight, ten or twelve clergymen, chosen by as many denominations; then, like those men who apply to enter the medical department of the army or navy, who are required to obtain the approval of a Board of Surgeons, so let all candidates for the chaplaincy pass an examination of this Board, from which a certificate of approval should be made necessary to constitute the applicant eligible to an appointment.[67]

Such a reform did not take place until 1913.

Two other changes occurred in 1860 which modified the operation of the Navy chaplaincy. In that year all Navy chaplains were directed to make an annual report of their activities. In the same year, a liturgical and theological issue was settled when the following provision became law: "Every chaplain shall be permitted to conduct public worship according to the manner and forms of the church of which he may be a member."[68]

Meanwhile, Methodism continued its rapid growth in America. The Methodist preacher covered a circuit which included stations or small churches. They came to be known as "Circuit Riders." The circuit rider was ideally suited to move west with the population, and also a new evangelistic format, the Camp Meeting, was utilized with great success. From 1810 to 1820, the population west of the Alleghnies increased from sightly over 1,000,000 to 2,250,000.[69] The

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[67] Lorenzo Dow Johnson, "An Address to the Pastors and People of These United States on the Chaplaincy of the General Government" (September 16, 1857), 18, as quoted in ibid., I, 66.

[68] Navy Regulations, 1920, Article 1245(10), as quoted in ibid., I, 69.

[69] Lee and Sweet, A Short History of Methodism, 53.

Methodists from 1790 to 1810 more than tripled to include 604 travelling preachers and nearly 175,000 members of nearly 2.5 percent of a total population in excess of 7,000,000.[70]

> The War of 1812 did not disrupt Methodism as had the Revolutionary War. A few pastors went into the military as soldiers such as Hezekiah G. Leigh of North Carolina, but Methodist records carry little information concerning the Church's involvement. On one occasion Asbury dined with a Maryland family who strongly opposed the war. When they expressed their sentiments, Asbury supposedly replied, "They have no business here. Let them go home from whence they came. I shall pray against them with my might, that is all I can do."[71]

The obituaries for several pastors provide interesting accounts of involvement with military personnel during this time. Elisha Bowman was the first Methodist preacher sent into the newly acquired Louisiana Territory. On January 29, 1806, he wrote about his work with a number of sailors in New Orleans.[72] This work seemed to parallel similar work and efforts in other port cities.

Richmond Nolley performed some of his ministry in Georgia during a time when there was much hostility and warfare with the Indians. The people left their homes and farms and fled to forts for protection. "Nolley never stopped, but rather made use of these forted gatherings for preaching the word. From fort to fort the

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70 Barclay, History of American Missions, I, 121; Morris, Encyclopedia of American History, 443.

71 Duren, Francis Asbury, 197-98.

72 The letter, written to the Rev. William Burke, is quoted in Summers, Biographical Sketches, 254-60.

pale messenger of peace passed, comforting, encouraging, instructing the people."[73]

Another Methodist preacher, J. W. Kenney, also worked with the military in several capacities. In 1824, Kenney moved to a place fifteen miles above Rock Island, Illinois. Nearby was a garrison of United States soldiers. "During these years (1824-1828) my father preached in the Fort once a month and on the afternoon of the day preached on the main land," his daughter, Mrs. Lee, reported.[74]

In 1832, the Black Hawk War raged around Rock Island. The settlers fled into the fort for protection. This time, instead of pursuing his pastoral duties, Kenney helped raise a company of militia and was elected captain. The Kenney family went home to Kentucky when, after four months, the war was not over. Kenney continued to lead his company until the war ended in August, 1832, and then rejoined his family.

Mrs. Lee's account of her father then reported he moved to Texas to serve as a preacher again. While there, the Mexican War took place. "The patriotic blood in my father's veins would not let him evade his country's call, so he shouldered his gun and as a volunteer joined Houston's army."[75] While he did not participate in

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[73] Ibid., 266; Minutes, 1773-1828, 275.

[74] Mrs. A. J. Lee, "Rev. J. W. Kenney," The Texas Methodist Historical Quarterly, I(July, 1909), 46.

[75] Ibid., 47, 50-51.

in any major fighting, his role had varied once again depending on the crisis being faced.

In the General Conference of 1828, Nathan Bangs moved that a proposal governing ministers who served seamen be brought up on the floor and it passed. In the Minutes of that Conference, "those preachers that may be appointed to labor for the special benefit of seamen" were included in a group of special type appointments.[76] While this ministry covered both military and civilian seamen, it was an official effort by the Methodists to reach uniformed personnel.

Another form of Methodist chaplaincy prior to the Civil War was a specialized ministry for work in penal institutions. In 1834, Russell Bigelow served as chaplain to the Ohio penitentiary. This was near the end of his life, but his obituary indicates that he served well. His bishop appointed him to this position at a regular conference session in 1834.[77]

In 1855-1856, a number of institutional ministerial appointments were made. Ballard E. Gibson served for two years as a

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76 Journals of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1796-1836 (New York: Carlton and Phillips, 1855), 324-25; The Doctrine and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1824 (New York: 1824), 25; The Doctrine and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1828 (New York: 1828), 25.

77 Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church: 1829-1839 (New York: T. Mason and G. Lane, 1840), 404.

chaplain to the University of Virginia in the early 1850's.[78] By then, there were several men serving at penal institutions in various parts of the country. In the New England Conference, William R. Stone served as chaplain of the Middlesex House of Correction and Henry E. Hampstead served in a similar capacity at the State Prison in Charlestown. David Miller's obituary noted his work as chaplain to the State Prison at Weathersfield, New York. J. Luckey was named at the New York Conference in 1856 as chaplain of the Sing Sing State Prison. He was identified as a member of the Sing Sing Quarterly Conference which indicated that a congregation existed there.[79] This parallels the local church which Chaplain Eskridge had begun on the frigate Cumberland.

The number of Methodist chaplains serving Navy personnel increased gradually. By 1860, Navy records indicate that eleven Methodist pastors had served or were serving as chaplains. However, a search of Conference records for the same period indicates only five reported as regular Conference appointments. These include Vernon Eskridge of Virginia, C. W. Thomas of Georgia, R. Given and

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[78] Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, For the Years 1855-1866 (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1878), 613. (Hereafter cited as Minutes, South, 1855-1866.)

[79] Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church For the Years 1856-1857 (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1857), 40, 58, 62. (Hereafter cited as Minutes, M. E. Church, 1856-1857.)

J. L. Lenhart of the New Jersey Conference,[80] and Charles A. Davis of Virginia.[81]

In addition, there were numerous appointments to seamen-related ministeries. The designations for these vary but appear to be special arrangements by local Methodist groups to meet the particular needs of sailors in various ports. In Wilmington, North Carolina, in 1855, William J. Langdon was appointed as "Preacher to Seamen." The Alabama Conference named Sheldon J. Kelly to the Navy Yard in 1855 and Francis T. J. Brandon in 1856. In 1859, William Spillman was assigned to "Bethel Ship" in the Mobile District which indicated a vessel used as a church itself. A Seamen's Bethel in Louisville, Kentucky, and in Richmond, Virginia, in 1860 meant that this form of ministry also extended to the river personnel.[82]

These posts were not limited to the Southern Church. In 1856, G. G. Brook was appointed to Baltimore's Seamen Bethel and Elon J. Way went to Mariner's Bethel in Philadelphia. C. A. Wombough at Newark's Mariner's Harbour, E. T. Taylor at Boston's Mariner's Church, W. P. Corbit at Seamen's Chapel in New York and J. J. Matthias, chaplain to the Seamen's Friend Retreat in New York, were all examples of a developing effort by Methodists to minister to

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80 Minutes, South, 1855-1866, 613, 625, 47.

81 Minutes, M. E. Church, 1856-1857, 26.

82 Minutes, South 1855-1866, 622, 636, 712, 163, 200, 242.

seamen in 1856. As in the south, the river personnel were also covered with posts being filled in Cleveland, Sandusky and Cincinnati, Ohio.[83]

While the Methodist Churches in the North and the South endeavored to reach the sailors in various ports, no official appointments to the United States Army occurred in this period. The ministry of the Methodists to the soldiers continued but primarily through the local coverage of circuit riders in the wilderness areas and by local pastors who served parishes near the various military installations.

There were not many Army chaplains in this period. "Apart from volunteer chaplains, special presidential appointees and militia chaplains, there were eighty appointed between April 2, 1813 and March 26, 1856."[84] Of these, three were Methodist and twelve of unknown affiliation. The Army, however, in its own way placed its chaplains in more of a fixed format with widely differing forms of recruitment.

In some cases, indeed at most fixed posts, chaplains were secured by voluntary contributions which were handled by local Councils of Administration. In the Army Regulations of 1820, chaplains wore a regular uniform except for one specification. "Chaplains . . . are to wear cockades only." In 1825, Major General

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[83] Minutes, M. E. Church, 1856-1857, 8, 20, 26, 39, 55-56, 87, 130, 150.

[84] D. A. Thompson, "The American Army Chaplaincy" (Part II), The Army-Navy Chaplain, XVI (October-November 1945), 16.

Winfield Scott's official revision of the Army Regulations stated that "Chaplains . . . have no uniform."[85] It remains uncertain whether, despite provisions such as these, there were any chaplains on active duty with the Army for the twenty years before 1838.[86]

On July 5, 1838, the position of Post Chaplain was established. He was to be chosen by the Council of Administration of a post with pay suitable for his services but not to exceed forty dollars a month in addition to "four rations per diem, with quarters and fuel."[87] Two days later, the number of posts having chaplains was limited to twenty, and in 1849 this number increased to thirty.[88] The Post Chaplain also served as a school master for the post. Often the chaplain filled a number of additional duties such as post librarian, defense counsel, recreation officer and

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[85] D. A. Thompson, "The American Army Chaplaincy" (Part I), XVI (July-August, 1945), 31.

[86] John Tebbell, The Compact History of the Indian Wars (New York: Hawthorn Books, Inc., 1966), 167; William Addleman Ganoe, The History of The United States Army, Rev. Ed., (Ashton, Md.: Eric Lundberg, 1964), 183-84; Edward A. Simon, "The Influence of the American Protestant Churches on the Development of the Structure and Duties of the Army Chaplaincy, 1914-1962," (unpublished Th. M. thesis, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1963), 11, (hereafter cited as Simon, "Influence of Churches on the Chaplaincy.") Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army, 79.

[87] Peters (ed.), Public Statutes, 25th Congress, II Session, Chap. 162, Sec. 18, Act of July 5, 1838 (1850), as quoted in Pfab, "American Hospital Chaplains." 4.

[88] Ibid., Chap. 194, Act of July 7, 1838, 308; ibid., 30th Congress, II Session, Chap. 83, Sec. 3, Act of March 2, 1849 (1851), 351; as quoted in Pfab, "American Hospital Chaplains." 4.

occasionally even postmaster and officers' mess officer.[89]

During the Mexican War, Congress provided for chaplains by authorizing one chaplain per brigade to be hired by the Councils of Administration. The same Act provided that chaplains should accompany their units to Mexico when a majority of their men went. The Act further provided that if they did not go, they would be immediately dismissed.[90] Despite the build-up for war, the number of chaplains remained small.

The chaplaincy at mid-point in the nineteenth century was still far from clearly defined and established. As of 1857, the number of Army chaplains remained at about half the number of positions authorized. Denominational coverage was lacking and by far the majority of both Army and Navy chaplains had been Episcopalians.[91] Procedures for recruitment were largely left to local posts as were qualifications. The result in the Army was an erratic structure, heavily dependent upon available local coverage. The Methodists did their part but both structure and popular support for the chaplaincy was lacking. The Methodist role in ministering to the military became highly significant soon after the Civil War began.

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89 Simon, "The Influence of the Churches on the Chaplaincy," 11.

90 As noted in ibid., 11-12. This penalty was perhaps included since Army chaplains for one of the first times would have to serve in a foreign country.

91 Thompson, "The American Army Chaplaincy," Part II, 14, 16.

Chapter 3

MINISTRY TO FEDERAL FORCES IN THE CIVIL WAR

The advent of the Civil War found Methodists in America already divided into two sizeable but separate institutions. Sectional animosity prevailed and many saw the popular issues of the day in largely religious and moral terms. While this was true of the churches in general, it was true in particular with reference to the Methodist Churches.[1] The division into a northern and a southern institution occurred at the General Conference in 1844. There the technical issue was the qualifications of Bishop James O. Andrew as an episcopal leader due to slave ownership. However, the real issue was slavery itself and this early division within Methodism was a significant factor in the later division of the nation in 1861.[2]

The Northern Church, while performing the usual tasks of preaching, teaching and serving, envisioned a large mission for itself. Its call was to change those laws, institutions and practices which it saw as evil. The Abolitionists worked through the churches to attack the institution of slavery and became political activists.

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[1] Cameron, Methodism and Society in Historical Perspective, I, 187.

[2] Sydney E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), 668-69; Charles W. Ferguson, Organizing to Beat the Devil: Methodists and the Making of America (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1971), 232ff. Senators Calhoun and Webster both noted the Methodist division and its impact in debating the Compromise Bill of 1850. See William Warren Sweet, The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War (Cincinnati: Methodist Book Concern Press, 1912), 42-43.

They saw slavery as an evil and their opposition to it took the form of a religious crusade.

This basic position is important because it helps explain how the Northern Methodists could so deeply involve themselves in supporting the Union during the Civil War. Once the war began, Methodists quickly rallied to support the cause in their part of the nation and zealously worked and sacrificed in an effort at victory. At no other point did the Methodists so consistently endorse such a military cause. This obviously had a definite impact on the church's ministry to military personnel during wartime.

During the war, the Northern Methodists enjoyed a new status as a religious group. Since their arrival in America, they had been set aside generally as an obscure and radical sect, but they had continued to grow and spread with the nation. Following the astute and powerful leadership of Bishop Matthew Simpson, Methodists in the North became very influential in the Civil War period. Methodists took a great deal of pride in his close association with President Lincoln and other key leaders. The loyalty and support of the Methodists drew from President Lincoln eloquent statements of appreciation. In response to a General Conference greeting and pledge of loyalty in 1864, the President replied:

> Gentlemen,--In response to your address allow me to attest the accuracy of its historical statements, indorse the sentiment it expresses, and thank you in the nation's name for the sure promise it gives.
>
> Nobly sustained as the government has been by all the Churches, I would utter nothing which might in the least appear invidious against any. Yet without this it may

> fairly be said that the Methodist Episcopal Church, not less devoted than the best, is, by its greater numbers, the most important of all. It is no fault in others that The Methodist Church sends more soldiers to the field, more nurses to the hospitals, and more prayers to heaven than any. God bless the Methodist Church! bless all the Churches! and blessed be God! who in this our great trial giveth us the Churches.[3]

The Methodists aided the war effort in many ways. They recruited personnel for military units, served in great numbers themselves and, perhaps most significantly, gave to the war effort a tone of morality and blessing that turned it from a bloody, bitter sectional struggle into a crusade for right and good. In a very real way, this made a difference of considerable importance to the members of the military, since morale is of crucial significance in any military unit.

The military forces in the Civil War involved both soldiers and sailors. Despite its smaller numbers, the Navy played a significant role throughout the war. This was true especially for the Northern forces. The primary mission of the Navy in the Civil War involved three aspects for the North: blockading the South, coastal bombardment and transportation when needed along the coasts and several rivers. The Southern Navy sought to accomplish its main mission of supply but its service soon ended with the success of the Northern fleets.

The Federal Navy was a considerably larger operation than its

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[3] James W. May in Bucke, History of American Methodism, II, 215-16. See also Ralph E. Morrow, Northern Methodism and Reconstruction (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1956), 14ff.

Confederate counter-part. During the Civil War, it expanded from 7,600 enlisted men to 51,500 and the number of vessels rose to nearly 700. At the beginning of the war, the Navy had a full complement of twenty-four chaplains. However, this number dwindled and the average number of chaplains on duty with the Navy was only nineteen, dropping from one chaplain for every 320 enlisted men in 1861 to one for every 2,450 men in 1865.[4]

The first Navy chaplain to die as a result of enemy action was a Methodist, John L. Lenhart. Chaplain Lenhart was the only Navy chaplain to lose his life in the Civil War. He died on March 8, 1862, when the USS Cumberland, a wooden ship, was rammed and sunk by the Confederate iron-covered Virginia (formerly the Merrimac) at Hampton Roads with a loss of 150 men. Chaplain Lenhart was trapped below decks when the ship sank.[5]

Several significant changes occurred in the Navy chaplaincy during the Civil War. On July 17, 1862, compulsory attendance at services was dropped as a requirement for the first time. Age and health requirements for chaplains entering the Navy became law in 1860 and 1862 respectively. In 1863, chaplains and professors of mathematics received equal rank with commanders if they had served over twelve years and with lieutenant commanders if they had less time in the Navy. Ten Navy chaplains received this relative rank of

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[4] Drury, History of Chaplain Corps, United States Navy, I 93, 95.

[5] Clifford Merrill Drury, "The Story of Four Chaplains," The Chaplain, XIV (April, 1957), 24.

commander in 1863, one of whom, Rodman Lewis, was a Methodist.[6] In all, Methodists supplied about one-third of the Navy chaplains during the Civil War.

The pay of Navy chaplains was the same as that specified for lieutenants in the Act of July 16, 1862. This amount was $1,875 per year while on sea duty, $1,500 while on shore, $1,200 while on leave or awaiting orders and $1,000 if retired.[7] This remained in effect during the war although retirement pay was adjusted in 1864.

The church pennants differed in the two Navies. The Federal Navy used a blue Greek Cross while the Confederate Navy adopted a red Latin Cross on a white background. Admiral David G. Farragut published the first known order concerning the display of the Church Pennant. His order was issued on April 26, 1862.[8] In 1863 the Federal Navy chaplains received authorization to wear the silver Latin Cross on their shoulder straps and caps as a distinctive insignia.[9]

The Methodists in the North continued their ministry to river workers and seamen. In 1861, the East Baltimore Conference reported Henry Furlong as pastor at Seamen's Union Bethel; the Baltimore Conference named John W. Wold to Seamen's Bethel; the Missouri and Arkansas Conference assigned W. A. Pile to the First

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[6] Drury, The History of the Chaplain Corps, United States Navy, I, 100, 103, 104.

[7] Ibid., 109.

[8] Ibid., 107.

[9] Ibid., 99.

Boatmen's Church in St. Louis; and Samuel M. Beatty was sent as chaplain to the Mariner's Bethel in Cleveland by the North Ohio Conference.[10] In addition to these, John C. Smith of the Indiana Conference served as Agent of the Western Seamen's Friend Society; L. C. Cheney of the New York East Conference was chaplain of the American Seamen's Friend Society; J. D. Butler was named chaplain and agent for the New Bedford Port Society by the Providence Conference; and J. A. Swaney went as chaplain to the Seamen's Friend Society of Callao, South America from the Pittsburg Conference.[11] The civilian work for sailors by Methodists was quite extensive at this point. Still later, D. W. Couch was assigned to Seamen's Friend work in 1864 by the Wisconsin Conference although his place of work was not identified.[12]

The ministry to land forces in both Armies in the Civil War is quite complex for several reasons. First, the war effort left few, if any, segments of American society untouched. The entire

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[10] Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, For the Years 1860-1861 (New York: Carlton and Porter, n.d.), 9, 15, 20, 150.

[11] Ibid., 200, 81, 51, 39.

[12] P. S. Bennett and James Lawson, History of Methodism in Wisconsin (Cincinnati: Cranston and Stowe, 1890), 487.

nations, Union and Confederate, were deeply involved.[13] The number of military personnel involved was enormous and the number of casualties was severe. Second, the Civil War lasted four years and two weeks. During this time, many military changes took place and likewise fundamental shifts in morale occurred. Third, the nature of the chaplaincy and of the ministry to military personnel was poorly defined at the beginning of the war and went through stages of change from time to time, often on a trial and error basis. The period, however, was a highly significant one in the evolution of the chaplaincy and the effort by Churches to minister to military personnel.

In 1861, the Union Army chaplaincy was poorly organized. The law still in effect went back to 1849 when some thirty chaplain positions were authorized.[14] Even such simple matters as uniform, pay, methods of appointment and qualifications to serve lack precise definition and left a great deal to the discretion and judgement of local military officials. It is not surprising that abuses

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[13] Prior to the outbreak of the war itself, violence and belligerence were evident in border states such as "Bleeding Kansas" and Missouri. (See H. D. Fisher, The Gun and the Gospel: Early Kansas and Chaplain Fisher (2nd ed., Chicago: Medical Century Company, 1897)). Trouble involving Methodists also broke out in Texas where Anthony Bewley was hanged by a pro-slavery mob near Fort Worth on September 13, 1860 (see Minutes M. E. Church, 1860-1861, 40), and where Bishop E. S. Janes confronted severly agitated Methodist people in March, 1859. (E. S. Janes, "The Disturbance in Texas," Texas Methodist Historical Quarterly, II (January, 1911), 191-204).

occurred and ineffective coverage often resulted. This was to drastically change in 1861.

Laudatory evaluations of the chaplains were evident in numerous places as were negative appraisals of their work. To try to balance one group against the other seems futile, but the points made in either praise or condemnation deserve our consideration. A few of these points were noted here as a partial explanation for corrective actions which were to follow. Bruce Catton's evaluation was:

> Chaplains the army had in plenty--one for each regiment--to give the boys spiritual consolation. Yet as one reads the memoirs and diaries there is a distinct impression that as a group, and with honorable exceptions, the chaplains somehow did not quite measure up. There were too many misfits; in that free-and-easy age, too many unqualified men, perhaps, had taken holy orders.[15]

In late 1861, Senator Henry Wilson asked the Paymaster General, Benjamin F. Larned, to explore ways of lowering war expenses. His reply points up some severe weaknesses which existed as of December 5, 1861.

> Chaplains: I regret to say that very many holding this position are utterly unworthy, and while I would not deprive our regiments of the services of a minister of the gospel, I think none should be appointed who did not come recommended by the highest ecclesiastical authority with which he is connected. It is said one regiment employs a French cook, and musters him as chaplain to meet the expense. I cannot vouch for the

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[15] Mr. Lincoln's Army (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday and Company, 1951), 180.

truth of this rumor, but I do know that some are utterly unworthy their position.[16]

On February 22, 1863, Major General O. O. Howard stirred a great deal of public response and reaction when he declared in the Hall of Representatives in Washington that "the chaplaincy system of the Army has proved a failure." A year later, he sought to explain his critical remark at the second anniversary of the U. S. Christian Commission. His explanation was that "I mourn often that in my command there are so few chaplains at all. . . ."[17] This was a widespread criticism unfortunately and was shared by many sections of the Northern Army.

> A delegate in the Army of the Cumberland reported that in that Army there was not more than one chaplain to five regiments. As late as January, 1865, an officer of the Army of the Potomac reported that . . . in the Fifth Corps there were thirty-seven regiments without chaplains. In the Second Corps it was worse; . . . thirty-eight regiments plus the supporting elements without chaplains.[18]

The rapid build-up in numbers of chaplains involved several poorly qualified opportunists. "Some were illiterate or narrowly sectarian, others were mercenary or lacked devotion."[19] The

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16 The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, 4 series, 73 vols. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Ser. III, I, 728. (Hereafter cited as Official Records.)

17 Reported in The Chronicle Intelligencer on March 5, 1863, and quoted in James O. Henry, "History of the United States Christian Commission" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Maryland, 1959), 190, 198.

18 James O. Henry, "The United States Christian Commission," The Chaplain, Vol. XX (August, 1963), 41.

19 Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army, 119.

Methodists contributed to this problem somewhat. Certain local preachers (lay preachers) of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in Pennsylvania especially, had obtained ordination at the hands of an independent Congregational Church for the sole purpose of becoming chaplains in the army.[20] Fortunately, the Methodists in that area corrected this situation rapidly.

These criticisms are but a sampling of the ones available. They point out some of the problem areas with which the government, the Army and the Churches had to deal. Changes did come about through legislation, leadership and discipline, and responsible action by the Churches. The Civil War was a time of growth and development concerning the ministry to military personnel.

From thirty authorized positions in early 1861 to about 4,000 as the probable number of military chaplains in the Civil War was a radical degree of growth.[21] This increase began for the North in 1861 when President Abraham Lincoln called for 500,000 troops on July 22.[22] In requesting these troops, the law provided for chaplains. An earlier General Order read:

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[20] Sweet, Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War, 135.

[21] Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army, 120-22.

[22] William Addleman Ganoe, The History of The United States Army (rev. ed., Ashton, Maryland: Eric Lundberg, 1964), 259. This refers to legislation signed into law by President Lincoln providing for volunteers. The legislation for regular army units and chaplains became law on August 3, 1861. Pfab, "American Hospital Chaplains," 5.

> There will be allowed to each regiment one chaplain, who will be appointed by the regimental commander on the vote of the field officers and company commanders on duty with the regiment at the time the appointment is made. The chaplain so appointed must be a regularly ordained minister of some Christian denomination and will receive the pay and allowances of a captain of cavalry.[23]

The military units could pretty well choose a chaplain as they wished. The law for Federal troops prescribed that vacancies among volunteer officers should be filled by vote. Company officers were elected by the men in that company while the regimental officers selected the remaining commissioned personnel of the regiment. The Governors, in turn, were required to commission such selections.[24] J. B. Reynolds, a Methodist preacher in Wisconsin enlisted as a private in 1864. The Northwest Wisconsin Annual Conference subsequently petitioned Governor Lewis to commission him as a chaplain and it was done.[25] Despite the wide latitude in selecting chaplains, often the charge of favoritism was made.[26]

This type system for selecting chaplains could work quite effectively where units were manned with personnel from one specific

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[23] General Orders No. 15, Sect. 4, War Department, Adjutant General's Office, Washington, D. C., May 4, 1861, s/L. Thomas, Adjutant General in Official Records, Ser. III, I, 154. This general order provided for the organization of volunteer regiments. General Order 16 on the same day provided for new units in the Regular Army and contained the same wording in reference to chaplains. Ibid., 157.

[24] Ganoe, History United States Army, 260.

[25] Bennett and Lawson, History of Methodism in Wisconsin, 391.

[26] L. G. Vander Velde, The Presbyterian Churches and the Federal Union, 1861-1869 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932), 429-30.

area such as a county or township. In such a case, usually a local pastor would go along with his people as their chaplain. However, as the war wore on and many casualties caused the mergers of units and the breakdown of home town membership, the system of selection also deteriorated in its effectiveness.

The Federal Government did take several positive steps in an effort to improve certain aspects of the chaplaincy and to increase the quality of chaplain personnel. On August 3, 1861, General Order 49, Section 9, required that chaplains make official reports at the end of each quarter to their regimental commanders.[27] On May 20, 1862, Congress authorized the President to appoint a chaplain for each permanent hospital.[28]

General Order 91, Section 8, on July 29, 1862, corrected earlier documents concerning ecclesiastical endorsement of chaplains. The new ruling read:

> That no person shall be appointed a chaplain in the United States Army who is not a regularly ordained minister of some religious denomination, and who does not present testimonials of his present good standing as such minister, with a recommendation for his appointment as an army chaplain from some authorized ecclesiastical body, or not less than five accredited ministers belonging to said religious denomination.[29]

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[27] Official Records, Ser. III, I, 382.

[28] Official Records, Ser. III, II, 67. General Order 78 on July 29, 1862, further stipulated that the chaplain "would be subordinate to the hospital surgeons." Ibid., 222.

[29] Ibid., 278.

Among other things, this now allowed the appointment of Jewish chaplains as President Lincoln had promised Rabbi Arnold Fischel in a letter on December 14, 1861.[30] It also eliminated some of the "free lance" type chaplains who had caused many problems.

A third action occurred in 1862 when commanders were required,

> to inquire into the fitness, efficiency and qualifications of the chaplains of hospitals or regiments, and to muster out of service such chaplains as were not appointed in conformity with the requirements of this act, and who have not faithfully discharged the duties of chaplains during the time they have been engaged as such.[31]

These three steps constituted a responsible effort by government officials both to improve the quality of chaplains who entered the military and to hold them responsible for a conscientious effort during their time of service.

Many Methodist pastors served as chaplains during the Civil War. Vander Valde estimated that one-third of the Federal military chaplains were Methodists.[32] Sweet identified 491 Methodist pastors from the Northern Conferences who served as chaplains to the Federal troops. He also listed twelve pastors from the Southern Conferences

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[30] Roy P. Basler (ed.), The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1953), V, 69.

[31] Quoted in Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army, 109.

[32] Presbyterian Churches and the Federal Union, 429.

who served in the Federal units.[33] In addition, other Methodist pastors served locally in units of home guards.[34]

A number of Methodist ministers did not elect to serve in the military as chaplains but rather as regular soldiers. Charles Henry Fowler, later to become a bishop, organized a company of Evanston students and served as their captain.[35] In Missouri, S. Ing entered the Federal Army as a captain of cavalry and his company included another Methodist pastor named Wood who served as a private.[36] One Methodist pastor, Granville Moody, commanded the 74th Ohio Regiment and was to become famous as the "Gallant Fighting Preacher."[37] The number of pastors serving as regular soldiers included 63 who already held commissions in Federal units in early 1862. This group

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[33] Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War, 189-96. See also Wallace Guy Smeltzer, Methodism on the Headwaters of the Ohio: The History of the Pittsburg Conference of the Methodist Church (Nashville: Parthenon Press, 1951), 238.

[34] Carl Wittke, William Nast: Patriarch of German Methodism (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1959), 199; William E. Brooks (ed.), From Saddlebags to Satellites: A History of Florida Methodism (Nashville: Parthenon Press, 1969), 67.

[35] A. B. Hyde, The Story of Methodism: Tracing the Rise and Progress of that Wonderful Movement, Which Like the Gulf Stream, Has Given Warmth to Wide Waters and Verdure to Many Lands; and Giving an Account of its Various Influences and Institutions of Today (New York, M. W. Hazen Co., 1887), 398-99.

[36] Charles Elliott, South-Western Methodism: A History of the M. E. Church in the South-West, From 1844 to 1864 (Cincinnati: Poe and Hitchcock, 1868), 334, 350.

[37] May in Bucke, History of American Methodism, II, 226-28.

included 4 colonels, 2 lieutenant colonels, 1 major, 36 captains and 20 other officers.[38] Still other pastors served temporarily in times of crisis. During the Battle of Gettysburg, the Methodist ministers in Philadelphia recruited other pastors and formed an entire company of ministers to dig fortifications for the city.[39]

While these Methodist ministers served as regular soldiers, the ministry of the Churches within the military forces was carried on through the efforts of the official Army chaplains. Many facets of the chaplaincy changed during the course of the Civil War. Among these were items such as uniform, insignia and pay. The uniform for Federal chaplains varied early in the war. Despite a specific regulation which clearly defined the proper uniform, variety continued until discretion dictated a more subdued attire. Chaplain Pinkney Hammond criticized the chaplains who wore fancy uniforms early in the war and blamed some lingering prejudice against chaplains on this. He felt this problem was corrected by 1863 when he stated, "The sight of a chaplain arrayed in the uniform of a captain with

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[38] Smeltzer, Methodism on the Headwaters of the Ohio, 238.

[39] Sweet, Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War, 78.

shoulder straps and sword and belt and sash and revolver is one of rare occurrence."[40]

General Order Number 102 defined the official uniform for Federal chaplains in 1861 in the following way:

> The uniform for chaplains of the army will be plain black frock coat, with standing collar, and one row of nine black buttons; plain black pantaloons; black felt hat, or army forage cap, without ornament. On occasions of ceremony, a plain chapeau de bras may be worn.[41]

Three years later, General Order Number 247 added black braid around the buttonholes and a gold embroidered wreath on the hat.[42]

In 1857, the annual pay of an Army Post Chaplain was set at $1,159, in addition to quarters and fuel.[43] The legislation of the Federal Government in April and May, 1861, allowed for chaplains to "receive the pay and allowances of a captain of cavalry." This created a problem in that the pay of a captain of cavalry was $1,746 a year as opposed to the lesser amount for Post Chaplains. Following

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[40] J. Pinkney Hammond, The Army Chaplain's Manual (Philadelphia: 1863), 26, as quoted in Pfab, "American Hospital Chaplains," 14. This manual by Chaplain Hammond included 144 pages for a service book and hymnal. This and another manual by Chaplain William Young Brown served as the origin of the technical and field manuals of the chaplaincy and of the official hymnal used by the military. "The American Army Chaplaincy: A Brief History," Department of the Army Pamphlet 165-1 (Washington: Department of the Army, 1955), 9-10.

[41] Quoted in Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army, 110.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army, 86.

a debate in Congress, the larger amount was retained and became a law on July 22, 1861.[44] Still later, the pay for Federal Army chaplains was reduced to $1,433.60 and forage for one horse. In 1864, they were allowed forage for a second horse.[45] The Northern Methodists did not see any need for further financial support to their army chaplains.[46]

Since the military chaplaincy was still developing, control and supervision were real problems. On August 3, 1861, General Order 49 dealt in part with this problem for Federal chaplains. Section 9 provided that chaplains

> shall be required to report to the colonel commanding the regiment to which he is attached, at the end of each quarter, the moral and religious condition of the regiment, and such suggestions as may conduce to the social happiness and moral improvement of the troops.[47]

Three years later, when the Federal chaplaincies involved several different kinds of chaplain assignments, the reports were re-directed and increased in frequency. On April 13, 1864, General Order 158 stipulated in Section 3,

> that it shall be the duty of chaplains in the military service of the United States to make monthly reports to the Adjutant-General of the Army, through the usual military channels, of the moral condition and general history of the regiments, hospitals, or posts to which they may be attached.[48]

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[44] Official Records, Ser. III, I, 154.

[45] Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army, 118.

[46] Elliott, South-Western Methodism, 342.

[47] Official Records, Ser. III, I, 382.

[48] Ibid., Ser. III, IV, 228.

Sometimes these specific requirements were modified in local units or were duplicated by a chaplain's role in other organizations. Chaplain H. D. Fisher, while on a detached tour of duty, had to report to his army headquarters weekly. He wrote, "I also had to report to my colonel in the South monthly, as to where I was and what engaged in; and to report to Mr. James Yatesman, secretary of the Sanitary Commission of St. Louis weekly."[49] At this time, Chaplain Fisher was chaplain of the Fifth Kansas Volunteers but in addition held four other positions.

Chaplain organization and supervision in the Federal units was fairly well left to the discretion of the local chaplains. One such organization came into existence in the spring of 1863 when thirty-nine chaplains assembled in Nashville and organized the Council of Chaplains for the Army of the Cumberland. Their purpose was "to discuss common problems and consider means of furthering the spiritual welfare of their respective organizations."[50] Chaplain Thomas Scully also reported a meeting of Federal chaplains in Washington early in the war but, to his disappointment, the primary purpose seemed to be the discussion of rank, uniforms and pay.[51]

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[49] Fisher, The Gun and the Gospel, 220. These positions were "Presiding Elder of the Baldwin City District, Agent of the Western Sanitary Commission, Superintendent of Contrabands for two states, Delegate to the General Conference, and the director of an immense work in the middle states."

[50] Bell Irvin Wiley, The Life of Billy Yank: The Common Soldier of the Union (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1952), 272.

[51] Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army, 143.

During the Civil War, chaplains ministered to their people in a variety of circumstances. Some of these efforts involved specialized ministries although most of these special areas were also handled by ordinary chaplains. One such specialized ministry was that of being a hospital chaplain. This was a need recognized in 1861 by President Lincoln. Some Federal hospitals were staffed by volunteers and were without the services of a chaplain. Beginning on September 25, 1861, President Lincoln wrote the following letter to seven clergymen:

> Sir: Having been solicited by Christian ministers and other pious people to appoint suitable persons to act as chaplains at the hospitals for our sick and wounded soldiers, and feeling the intrinsic propriety of having such persons to so act, and yet believing there is no law conferring the power upon me to appoint them, I think fit to say that if you will voluntarily enter upon and perform the appropriate duties of such position I will recommend that Congress make compensation therefore at the same rate as chaplains in the Army are compensated.[52]

On December 3, 1861, in his "Annual Message to Congress," President Lincoln reported on the letter he had sent and then added,

> These gentlemen, I understand, entered upon the duties designated, at the time respectfully stated in the schedule and have labored faithfully therein ever since. I therefore recommend that they be compensated at the same rate as chaplains in the army. I further suggest that general provision be made for chaplains to serve at hospitals, as well as the regiments.[53]

Congress did as the President had requested and on May 20, 1862, authorized one chaplain for each permanent hospital. Then, on

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[52] Official Records, Ser. III, I, 721. This was sent to three clergy on September 25, 1861, to two more on October 30, and to two more on November 7, 1861.

[53] Basler, Works of Abraham Lincoln, V, 40.

July 14, 1862, General Order 78 added, "Chaplains will be subordinate to the hospital surgeons."[54] This, in effect, made the Surgeon General a chief of hospital chaplains. Actually, his influence extended beyond his own corps for it was the Surgeon General "who formally issued Chaplain J. Pinkley Hammond's Army Chaplains' Manual (1863) with an appended hymnal and service book."[55]

The prison chaplaincy seems to have drawn little effort on behalf of the military in either the North or the South. Appointments to prisons by the Methodist Church, however, did continue at least in the North. In 1861, A. Webster served the Vermont State Prison; B. I. Ives served the Auburn State Prison; John Luckey served Sing Sing Prison in New York; H. W. Thomas was chaplain at the Iowa State Prison; Samuel Luckey served the Monroe County Penitentiary and John W. Sullivan was chaplain at the Indiana State Prison.[56] Also, Henry N. Sipes of the Baltimore Conference was appointed chaplain to the United States Penitentiary.[57] With the possible exception of Chaplain Sipes, these men would not necessarily have worked with prisoners of war.

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[54] Official Records, Ser. III, II, 67, 222.

[55] George H. Williams, "The Chaplaincy in the Armed Forces of the United States of America in Historical and Ecclesiastical Perspective" in Harvey G. Cox, Jr., (ed.), Military Chaplains: From a Religious Military to a Military Religion (New York: American Report Press, 1971), 35.

[56] Minutes, M. E. Church 1860-1861, 101, 89, 119, 133, 143, 191.

[57] Ibid., 16.

Some of the military chaplains were captured and became prisoners of war themselves. Chaplain Charles C. McCabe, a Methodist, was captured while tending to the wounded of his retreating regiment. He was sent to Libby Prison in Richmond where he almost died of typhoid fever before his release in 1863.[58] As was typical of most captured chaplains, he continued his ministry inside the prison. Chaplain McCabe played an active part in utilizing an innovative music program and also took part in the "University of Libby Prison" program.[59] In later years, Chaplain McCabe many times gave a brilliant lecture, "The Bright Side of Life in Libby Prison," and helped ease some of the bitter feelings created by the war.[60]

The prison terms of the chaplains varied widely in both time and circumstances. Like Chaplain McCabe, Chaplain J. H. Fowler reported favorably on life in prison.[61] On the other hand, at least one Confederate chaplain, John P. Richardson, a Methodist, died in prison.[62] Apart from treatment received, there was also the matter of disturbances created. Chaplain John F. Mines impressed James Lyons,

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[58] Frank Milton Bristol, The Life of Chaplain McCabe, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1908), 114.

[59] Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army, 142, 147. He did a great deal to popularize "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" which he sang for President Lincoln on February 2, 1864, and a year later at a memorial service for the President.

[60] Ibid., 150-51.

[61] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Army Life in a Black Regiment (New York: Collier Books, 1962), 221.

[62] Minutes Church, South, 1855-1866, 384.

the Confederate Commissioner, as being "impertinent and vindictive" and had no smattering of penitence. Consequently, Commissioner Lyons had his freedom considerably restricted. In June, 1862, General Bragg proposed to General Halleck that medical officers and chaplains should not be held but released. On July 1, 1862, General Order 46 made this official policy for the Confederates and the Union authorities followed with a similar statement, General Order 90, on July 26, 1862.[63]

Another specialized minsitry performed by many chaplains was that of correspondent. Basically, this ministry took two forms. First, the chaplains corresponded with or contacted the families of the men at critical or important times. Sometimes this contact was in person and Chaplain Fisher, for example, related how he delivered pay to the families of some of his men along with a personal greeting.[64] Another Methodist, Chaplain John E. Robie of the 22nd New York Regiment, told of the joy in Buffalo when he returned with pay, packages and letters from the men who had been gone for three months.[65]

Second, many chaplains wrote for the public in the North. Methodist Chaplain William C. Way of the 24th Michigan Infantry Regiment was the war correspondent of the Detroit Tribune while he was in the field. Two other Methodist chaplains, C. D. Pillsbury of

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[63] Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army, 97-98.

[64] Fisher, The Gun and the Gospel, 171.

[65] Sandford Hunt, Methodism in Buffalo From Its Origin to the Close of 1892 (Buffalo: H. H. Otis, 1893), 95-96.

Wisconsin and James S. Smart of Michigan, had numerous reports published in the Northwestern Christian Advocate.[66] Numerous reports and correspondence from Methodist chaplains and soldiers appeared consistently in The Christian Advocate and Journal of New York, Zion's Herald of Boston, the Buffalo Christian Advocate, the Pittsburgh Christian Advocate, the Pacific Christian Advocate, and the German paper, the Christian Apologist.[67]

Chaplain C. D. Pillsbury also sent to Methodists in Wisconsin a "Report on the State of the Country." The tone of his message was indicative of how strongly the feelings ran even among the clergy. He said, "At such a time neutrality is treason, silence crime, and inaction unpardonable." He described the Emancipation Proclamation as "a propitious offering to a justly offended God," and a "harbinger of some coming proclamation of universal peace."[68]

Several other specialized ministries by military chaplains involved needs of the military and of the individual soldiers. One of these special efforts was recruitment. Methodist Chaplain John E. Robie helped recruit part of the 22nd New York Regiment and then joined them as their chaplain.[69] Thomas J. Hill in Michigan raised

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66 Margaret Burnham Macmillan, The Methodist Church in Michigan: The Nineteenth Century (Grand Rapids: William B. Erdman's Publishing Co., 1967), 217, 219-20.

67 Sweet, Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War, 114, 127.

68 Bennett and Lawson, History of Methodism in Wisconsin, 201.

69 Hunt, Methodism in Buffalo, 50.

130 men and likewise joined them for six months until his health broke. When George Taylor of Detroit enlisted as a Methodist chaplain, the governor appointed him as recruiting agent for the State of Michigan. It was not until a year later that he joined the 8th Michigan Infantry as its chaplain.[70]

In Indiana, Methodist churches and leaders were often involved in recruitment. In the autumn of 1861, the governor authorized two Methodist pastors to raise the 57th Infantry Regiment and they did. Five Methodist pastors served as officers in this unit.[71] Bishop Matthew Simpson became known as "the evangelist of patriotism" and many followed his lead and entered the Federal Army.[72]

Then, there is the case of Chaplain Fisher of Kansas who performed so many unusual tasks. At one time or another, he served as a commander of troops, paymaster, scout, postmaster, commissioner of contraband, recruiter in Main and Massachusetts, superintendent of refugees, and even wagon master.[73]

Colonel Higginson, commander of the first American regular army regiment of freed slaves, made the following observation about

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[70] Macmillan, The Methodist Church in Michigan, 216, 221.

[71] H. N. Herrick and William Warren Sweet, A History of the North Indiana Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church from its Organization in 1844 to the Present (Indianapolis: W. K. Stewart Co., 1917), 73-74, 81.

[72] George R. Crooks, The Life of Bishop Matthew Simpson of the Methodist Episcopal Church (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1890), 377.

[73] Fisher, The Gun and the Gospel, 161ff.

the religious tone that was evident in the lives of the soldiers in his command:

> . . . never, since Cromwell's time, had there been soldiers in whom the religious element held such a place. "A religious army," "a gospel army," were their frequent phrases. In their prayer-meetings there was always a mingling, often quaint enough, of the warlike and the pious.[74]

While Higginson was referring to black troops in a Union regiment, the religious tone was characteristic of perhaps many Federal troops. Among Federal units, revivalism played a lesser role than in the South. Usually a Methodist chaplain would conduct a revival whenever his regiment settled down into camp for a stay of several months. Sweet reported on an Indiana regiment when 48 joined the regimental church and another revival for a New York regiment which lasted for thirty nights with 125 soldiers professing conversion.[75]

A recurring and troublesome question relating to the ministry had to do with sharing in or abstaining from the act of fighting. Should a chaplain be a combatant or a noncombatant? Charles W. Ferguson summarized the general Methodist feeling in these words:

> There was nothing remotely resembling pacifist sentiment in the broad reaches of American Methodism after the success of the Revolution. Once the state was established, even if through revolutionary action, its right to demand obedience at arms was not only not denied but in the main heartily accepted. Methodists did not think for or against military procedure; they acted. The right to fight in a cause that

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[74] Higginson, Army Life in a Black Regiment, 240.

[75] William Warren Sweet, Methodism in American History (Nashville: Abingdon Press, rev. 1953), 287.

> the state deemed vital was respected in a matter-of-fact way -- along with other rights that were dearly won and sacred.[76]

Ferguson then continued to describe the case of John M. Chivington, a Methodist pastor in Colorado. In 1861, he rejected the offer of a chaplaincy and commanded a Federal unit which defeated the Confederates at Glorieta Pass and ended their threat to the Southwest. Still later, in 1864, he led troops in a key Indian engagement which took the lives of 500 Indian men, women and children. His supporters called it a hard battle but the more accurate view referred to it as the Massacre at Sand Creek.[77]

Ferguson's statement was too general to be accurate. In 1864, the General Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church inserted into its Discipline the following position:

> The bearing of arms in military service by ministers of the Methodist Protestant Church is inconsistent with their professional calling, and the nature and intent of their ordination vows.[78]

In July, 1862, the Confederate and Union Armies published General Orders providing for the immediate release of all chaplains and medical officers captured in the war. They formulated this policy primarily because chaplains and surgeons were thought of as noncombatants. On August 22, 1864, at the Geneva Conference,

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[76] Organizing to Beat the Devil, 330.

[77] Ibid., 330-31.

[78] Cameron, Methodism and Society in Historical Perspective, 313.

"chaplains were officially declared noncombatants, along with doctors and other medical personnel."[79] However, despite official Church positions, General Orders and Geneva declarations, the chaplains in the military still were inconsistent in terms of the combatant or noncombatant roles they played.

Higginson told of a chaplain serving as a scout on combat patrols.

> Methinks I see our regimental saint, with pistols in belt and a Ballard rifle slung on shoulder, putting spurs to his steed, and cantering away down some questionable wood-path, or returning with some tale of Rebel haunt discovered, or store of foraging.[80]

In a battle at Resaca, Georgia, Methodist Chaplain John M. Springer of the Third Regiment Wisconsin Veteran Volunteers was fatally wounded. When the captain, first and second lieutenants fell in battle, he "seized the lieutenant's sword, and led the company to the charge, when immediately he was shot and one of his limbs fearfully shattered."[81] Whether or not he should be a combatant remained an individual decision made by each chaplain.

In 1864, General Order 158 produced the first summarization of the chaplain's official duties. Section 4 read:

> . . . that all chaplains in the military service of the United States shall hold appropriate religious services

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[79] Simon, "The Influence of the Churches on the Chaplaincy," 13.

[80] Higginson, Army Life in a Black Regiment, 119.

[81] Bennett and Lawson, History of Methodism in Wisconsin, 377.

> at the burial of soldiers who may die in the command to which they are assigned to duty, and it shall be their duty to hold public religious services at least once each Sabbath, when practicable.[82]

Worship services for military personnel involved several problems. Location and facilities presented problems for the chaplains on both sides in the Civil War. The organization of a congregation was also a problem and related to it was the problem of content and other issues of ecumenicity.

The facilities available for conducting public worship varied considerably. Services in the open were common. When a unit was on the march, services were held at night around campfires with the congregation seated on stumps, logs or on the ground. In balmy weather, the outdoor sanctuary prevailed and sometimes brush arbors were built to protect worshipers from sun and rain and also to provide some measure of privacy.[83]

Another form of shelter used was a tent. These were provided to some chaplains by friends, benevolent organizations, by the army or by men in the regiment. Chaplain Charles C. McCabe, a Methodist, was able to use his tent only once. An attack came and the tent disappeared. He did not see it again until two years later.[84] Some of these tents were used exclusively for worship services while

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[82] Official Records, Ser. III, IV, 228. This general order is dated April 13, 1864.

[83] Wiley, The Life of Billy Yank, 270-71.

[84] Bristol, The Life of Chaplain McCabe, 123.

others served various functions as a convenient meeting place for troops.

When it appeared that a unit would remain in one location for a period of time, more permanent structures were added. The United States Christian Commission offered canvas roofing to every Federal brigade which would build chapel walls. As a result of this effort, over 100 chapels were built for Federal troops in 1864 and were also equipped with stoves, hymnals and other equipment by the Commission.[85] Methodist Chaplain H. D. Fisher tells of building his chapel with one man's help as the Fifth Kansas Cavalry went into winter quarters in Camp Denver, Kansas. They built "a log house of rails, stopping the crevices with hay, covering all with a large tarpaulin, thus making a tent that would accommodate two hundred people."[86]

Many chaplains also felt the need for an organizational structure, a way of allowing their participants to become members of a chapel in some meaningful way. Various concepts began to develop in the war as early as the fall of 1861. The main concern was to band together those men who determined to lead a Christian life, regardless of their creed or denomination. The attempts to form a

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[85] U. S. Christian Commission, Third Annual Report (Philadelphia, 1865), 28, as cited in Wiley, The Life of Billy Yank, 271.

[86] Fisher, The Gun and the Gospel, 171.

permanent organization never materialized. In part this was due to a lack of communication between army chaplains.[87]

Methodist Chaplain H. D. Fisher also tells of organizing a "Camp Church" in 1861 "on a liberal Evangelical basis which I have reason to believe was the first camp church of the war. . . . This camp church lasted through the war, and some of its members are Christians to this day."[88]

In the Union Army, the most common form of organization was the Regimental Christian Association. The rules and creedal statements of these groups were quite simple. The object of the association of the 13th Pennsylvania Volunteers was "the moral and religious improvement of its members and of their fellow soldiers of the regiment and required that members take a pledge to live according to the Bible."[89] Colonel Granville Moody, a Methodist preacher who commanded the 74th Ohio Regiment, formed a "Church of the Living God" which many of his troops joined.[90]

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87 Vander Velde, The Presbyterian Churches and the Federal Union, 432. The author adds this footnote: "'Religious Movements In The Army,' Presbyterian, December 7, 1861, describing an organization affected by a meeting of chaplains of which Rev. Thomas P. Hunt (an Old School Presbyterian) was the president; also a letter of Dr. Samuel J. Baird, published in Presbyterian, January 18, 1862, in which the writer (an Old School Presbyterian) enthusiastically described another organization of the same sort." 432-33.

88 Fisher, The Gun and the Gospel, 163-64.

89 Wiley, The Life of Billy Yank, 272.

90 Sweet, Methodism in American History, 287.

In a real way, the lay leadership also reflected an interdenominational activity and emphasis. When the chaplains were absent, many of the services continued and laymen provided the leadership. In some units a man became "lay chaplain for the day."[91] Some commanders, such as Colonel Granville Moody, preached often. Others did less of this but still took their share of leadership for the services, prayer meetings and Bible studies. General O. O. Howard was also a noted lay preacher.[92]

Two other types of chaplaincy personnel need also to be mentioned. One woman served as a chaplain. Ella E. Gibson (Mrs. Ella E. G. Hobart) was a minister of the Religio-Philosophical Society of St. Charles, Illinois. She served for nine months as chaplain of the First Wisconsin Regiment of Heavy Artillery. Concerning her request for an appointment following her having been unanimously elected, President Lincoln wrote, "The President has not legally anything to do with such a question, but has no objection to her appointment."[93] Secretary Stanton, however, did not recognize her for appointment due to her sex and to his wish not to establish a precedent.[94]

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[91] Higginson, Army Life in a Black Regiment, 19.

[92] John A. Carpenter, Sword and Olive Branch: Oliver Otis Howard (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1964), 30.

[93] Letter to Edwin M. Stanton, November 10, 1864, in Basler, Works of Abraham Lincoln, VIII, 102-103.

[94] Ibid.

The second type of person involved in a special chaplaincy was the black chaplain or chaplains for black units. In the Union Army there were at least

> 139 chaplains assigned to some of the 158 Negro regiments. Only a few of these are known to have been Negroes, though others may have been. Among them were Henry M. Turner, William Hunter, James Underdue, and William Warring, of the First, Fourth, 39th and 102nd United States colored troops respectively, and Samuel Harrison of the 54th and William Jackson and John R. Bowles of the 55th Massachusetts Infantry.[95]

On April 9, 1864, Congress provided for 34 chaplains. Four of these were assigned to black units. According to Richard K. Smith, the black troops were referred to as "Buffalo Soldiers." He then noted that of the 14 chaplains serving in the Territory of Arizona, "six were Methodist, three Presbyterian, two Roman Catholic and one each Baptist, Lutheran and Episcoplian."[96]

The organizational structure for Methodist work in the armies was far from uniform or systematic. The pastors who served as chaplains in the military received their appointments from their respective bishops through the usual Annual Conference structure. However, there was no central organization in either the northern or

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[95] Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army, 116. Chaplain Harrison was involved in a pay dispute when a paymaster would pay him only ten dollars a month, the rate for laborers of African descent. President Lincoln was contacted on this by Governor John A. Andrew and finally brought it to the Senate on May 7, 1864, where the chaplain's pay was restored. Basler, Works of Abraham Lincoln, VIII, 280.

[96] Richard K. Smith, "For God, For Country, and For the Territory," Arizona Highways, XLIX (April, 1973), 8.

southern church to coordinate this work or to supervise the continuing ministry of the chaplains.

Two active bishops, one from each Church, served also as chaplains in the army for a period of time. Bishop Edward Raymond Ames served for a while as superintendent of Indian missions and in 1842 had been chaplain to the Choctaw Council.[97] He was elected a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1852. In 1861, he was appointed by the Union Army to serve as a chaplain for an Indiana Regiment. He served throughout the fall and winter of 1861-1862. In January, 1862, Bishop Ames and Hon. Hamilton Fish of New York were appointed by the War Department as commissioners to visit Union prisoners at Richmond. Permission for this was denied but the commissioners did succeed in negotiating an equal exchange of prisoners.[98]

The work of the Methodist Episcopal Church with Federal troops was sizeable. Wide popular support existed for the war effort. Methodist Episcopal Annual Conferences authorized committees on "The State of the Country," and resolutions pledging support of the government were passed, often unanimously.[99] However, the work of the Church apart from chaplains in the military was almost exclusively under the auspices of interdenominational groups.

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[97] Hyde, The Story of Methodism, 367.

[98] Sweet, Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War, 151-52.

[99] Barclay, History of American Missions, III, 54.

The ministry of the printed word was both extensive and effective. The Northern Church was able throughout the war to maintain its printing plants, and the various periodicals of the Church continued and grew in circulation. In 1860 the Northern Church had twenty-two periodicals with a combined weekly circulation of at least 400,000.[100] Early in the war advocates of good reading materials for the soldiers pushed hard and effectively to have Methodist periodicals sent to the soldiers. Consequently, the periodicals were sent and many soldiers had them available throughout the war. Special rates for soldiers were offered and in addition many Methodist groups sent donations to defray even these basic costs.[101]

A Methodist Tract Society was formed during the war by the Methodist Episcopal Church. The fact that donations for its support doubled from 1862 to 1865 demonstrates increasing popular support and production of various types of religious literature. The 1862 report to the Cincinnati Conference stated that "the soldiers generally received with eagerness the tracts offered them, especially the wounded and sick."[102] In 1864 the Tract Society reported

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100 Journal of the General Conference, 1860, 332-58, as cited in Sweet, The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War, 111.

101 Ibid., 129.

102 Quoted in ibid., 165.

donating over two million pages of tracts and hundreds of thousands of copies of its publication "Good News."[103]

The Methodists also worked with and through the American Bible Society. The Society began in 1816 and, when the Civil War started, its distribution of Scriptures increased rapidly. Their report of 1864 indicated that in addition to over 1,000,000 Bibles and Testaments distributed to Federal troops, over 200,000 volumes had been sent to Confederate personnel.[104] The Methodists supported the American Bible Society financially and furnished agents to help with the distribution of literature. The popularity of religious literature was due in part to the absence of reading material.[105]

The major thrust for the Methodist effort to minister to the military, however, came through the United States Christian Commission. The Christian Commission began on November 14, 1861, having been sponsored by the Young Men's Christian Association. The Commission was in a way the forerunner of the United Services Organization and along with the American Bible Society marked the beginning of interdenominational efforts to supplement the chaplains' work.[106]

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[103] Journal of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Held in Philadelphia, Pa., 1864 (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1864), 432-33.

[104] Cited in Sweet, The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War, 167.

[105] Wiley, The Life of Billy Yank, 156.

[106] John Harold Craven, "The Service of the Church to Service Personnel" (unpublished S.T.M. thesis, Harvard University Divinity School, May, 1956), 3.

The original Christian Commission had twelve members with Bishop E. S. Janes being the Methodist representative. He and Charles Demond drew up the original Plan of Operation for the Christian Commission.[107] Later, this commission was enlarged to forty-seven; two Methodists, Bishop Matthew Simpson and General Clinton B. Fisk, were in this larger group.

The work of the Christian Commission involved two types of services. First, it covered a religious ministry in an effort to augment the work of the army chaplains. Second, it covered a number of services for the sick and wounded. All this was done by delegates who received no salary and who volunteered to serve for a short term of about six weeks. During the war, some 5,000 delegates served of whom at least 458 were Methodist pastors and a number of others were Methodist laymen.[108]

Methodist support can be illustrated by the State of Michigan. In Michigan, the Rev. George Taylor, a Methodist, became Chief State Agent for the Christian Commission. A Methodist layman, John Owen, also represented Michigan on the national board. In addition, the Methodist women were instrumental in forming Soldier's Aid Societies in local churches to collect, process and make materials needed by the soldiers and made available to them through the

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[107] Henry, "History of the United States Christian Commission," 48.

[108] See Henry, "The United States Christian Commission," 38-42; Sweet, The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War, 164.

Christian Commission. Finally, fifteen Methodist ministers from Michigan served tours of duty as field delegates for the Commission.[109]

Methodist support for the Christian Commission throughout the North was quite strong. In Indiana, each Methodist District in the North Indiana Conference kept at least one delegate in the field at all times.[110] Former chaplain C. C. McCabe became a delegate and toured the North raising money for the Christian Commission including the single largest donation received, a gift of ten thousand dollars.[111] Most Conferences of the Northern Church passed resolutions commending the Christian Commission and pledging their continued support.[112] At the end of the war, Bishop Simpson was one of five trustees appointed to liquidate the Christian Commission's work and he delivered the final anniversary address in the Hall of Representatives in February, 1866.[113]

A similar operation to that of the United States Christian Commission was that of the United States Sanitary Commission. The Sanitary Commission was organized primarily for nurses under the

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[109] Macmillan, The Methodist Church in Michigan, 221, 234-39.

[110] Herrick and Sweet, History of the North Indiana Conference, 86-87.

[111] Bristol, The Life of Chaplain McCabe, 175-80.

[112] For such a resolution from the Newark Conference in 1864 see Sweet, The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War, 165-66.

[113] Bucke, History of American Methodism, II, 224.

direction of the Unitarian, the Rev. Henry Witney Bellows.[114] Many Methodists were actively involved in the work of this Sanitary Commission, including Chaplain H. D. Fisher. He served as an agent of the Western Sanitary Commission and travelled about soliciting funds for its support.[115] The General Conference of the Northern Church in 1864 received a glowing "Report of the Committee on the Christian and the Sanitary Commissions" which praised their work as a ministry of love.[116] Similar reports came from as far as the Oregon Conference in 1864 and showed how widespread was the Methodist support and involvement in the Northern Church.[117]

One last area of ministry and service by the Methodist Episcopal Church brought about sharp conflicts with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. This involved the possession and operation of the churches in conquered territories. In November, 1863, Bishop Edward R. Ames obtained from Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton an order directing the Federal commanders in the Departments of Missouri, Tennessee and the Gulf to

> place at the disposal of Rev. Bishop Ames all houses of worship belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in which a loyal minister, who has been appointed by a loyal Bishop of said Church does not officiate. . . . You are

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[114] Williams, "The Chaplaincy in Historical and Ecclesiastical Perspective," 38.

[115] Fisher, The Gun and the Gospel, 219.

[116] Journal of the General Conference, 1864, 431-33.

[117] Erle Howell, Methodism In The Northwest (Nashville: Parthenon Press, 1966), 292-93.

> expected to give him all the aid, countenance, and support practicable in the execution of his important mission. . . .[118]

A similar order concerning Methodist churches in North Carolina and Virginia went to Bishop O. C. Baker on December 9, 1863, as well as one for the churches in the Department of the South for Bishop E. S. Janes. On December 30, 1863, another similar order concerning Methodist churches in Kentucky and Tennessee went to Bishop Matthew Simpson.[119]

As a result of this, churches were taken over and the resentment of the Southern Methodists soared. On January 2, 1864, President Lincoln wrote a letter concerning the case of Dr. McPhetars, a Presbyterian pastor in St. Louis. In it President Lincoln said

> the U. S. Government must not as by this order, undertake to run the churches. When an individual, in a church or out of it, becomes dangerous to the public interest, he must be checked; but let the churches, as such take care of themselves. It will not do for the U. S. to appoint Trustees, Supervisors, or other agents for the Churches.[120]

Still later, this controversy caused the narrowing of the areas involved to exclude the Border States and finally the entire

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[118] This order, dated November 30, 1863, is quoted in Hunter Dickinson Farish, The Circuit Rider Dismounts: A Social History of Southern Methodism, 1865-1900 (Richmond: the Dietz Press, 1938; republished in New York: Da Capo Press, 1969), 23n-24n.

[119] Cited by Sweet, The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War, 99. A similar order pertaining to the Church of The United Brethren in Christ was issued on March 23, 1864. Ibid., 100.

[120] Basler, Works of Abraham Lincoln, VI, 33-34.

directive was rescinded. This was only the beginning of several bitter controversies between the Northern and Southern Churches.

The Methodist Episcopal Church had supported its government with loyalty and strenuous effort. Methodists had served their military personnel with affection and concern. The ministry by Methodists to their military forces had called forth sacrifice, innovation and devotion. The Civil War was the occasion for many changes in forms of ministry. Some would be retained as the chaplaincy moved through this highly formative stage and moved toward the end of the nineteenth century.

Chapter 4

THE METHODIST MINISTRY TO CONFEDERATE FORCES

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South involved itself deeply in support of the Confederate cause and of the military personnel who fought in the Civil War. As an institution, it suffered serious losses in terms of physical plants, disrupted efforts, finances, and membership. The role played by Southern Methodists in a losing cause reached significant proportions. The scope and procedures of Methodist efforts to minister to Confederate military personnel were wide and varied.

The basic mission of the Church as seen by Southern Methodists was to evangelize the world. They sought to let the government handle political issues including the institution of slavery. A strong case for law and order predominated along with a strong emphasis on freedom and self-determination as concerned state's rights. Southern Methodists accepted slavery because of Old Testament precedents and the southern Church worked diligently to seek the conversion of slaves.[1] In effect, the Southern Church pulled back to a role which focused on normal church work only, seeking a "Church and

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[1] Farish, The Circuit Rider Dismounts, 4.

State" status[2] in which these institutions had parallel existence but left each other alone.[3]

Once the Confederacy had proclaimed itself a separate country, Southern Methodists rapidly affirmed their patriotic support. An intense loyalty to the Confederacy in its battle for independence caused the Methodists quickly to involve themselves. In general, they felt that this was a moral struggle and the cause they supported was right. They fought primarily for the right of self-determination, or "State's Rights" rather than for the preservation of slavery or other motives attributed to the South by others. Their intensity of involvement can best be understood in light of this moral rationale.

As in the Federal forces, the military personnel of the Confederacy involved both soldiers and sailors. The part played by naval forces in the Southern effort was quite severely limited due to the continuing success of the Federal Navy. Once subdued, the Confederate Navy no longer had a major role in the Civil War. Its main effort was the task of supply and this ended with the successful blockade by the Northern fleet.

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[2] H. Richard Niebuhr, Christ and Culture (New York: Harper Bros., Publishers, 1951). Niebuhr outlines several positions taken by the Church throughout history. These include Christ Against Culture, The Christ of Culture, Christ Above Culture, Christ and Culture In Paradox and Christ the Transformer of Culture.

[3] In 1838 the Georgia Conference passed a resolution on slavery which exemplifies this type of compartmentalization. It is quoted by Richard M. Cameron in Bucke, The History of American Methodism, II, 27.

When the Civil War began, 322 naval officers and 106 Annapolis midshipmen chose to go with the Confederacy, although not a single ship was lost from the Northern fleet.[4] However, due primarily to the smaller size of the Confederate ships, no chaplains were commissioned although provisions had been made for this and even for an official uniform.[5] The Confederate regulations did provide seven articles concerning the work of chaplains, the same ones proposed by the Secretary of the Navy in 1858. One former chaplain, Joseph Pere Bell Wilmar, an Episcopalian, was captured in 1863 while returning from a voyage to England to secure medical supplies and Bibles for the Confederate Army.[6] The Methodists did offer some publications for sailors, however. The Soldiers' Tract Association published a semimonthly paper, The Army and Navy Herald, in Macon, Georgia.[7]

The Methodist work for river workers and seamen also continued during the Civil War. The Bethel Ships and Seamen's Friend work did not end with the outbreak of hostilities although drastic changes were inevitable. In 1861, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South reported William Holman as assigned to the Seaman's Bethel

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[4] Drury, The History of the Chaplain Corps, United States Navy, I, 93.

[5] Charles F. Pitts, Chaplains In Gray: The Confederate Chaplains' Story (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1957), 44. Drury, The History of the Chaplain Corps, United States Navy, I, 94.

[6] Ibid., I, 93-94.

[7] May in Bucke, History of American Methodism, II, 237.

from the Louisville Conference and Abel M. Chrietzberg assigned to Bethel in the South Carolina Conference at Charleston. Another pastor, Chaplain Charles W. Thomas of the Georgia Conference had served in the Navy since 1853. At the Conference session in 1861, the Minutes note only that he withdrew from the connection.[8]

The ministry to Confederate land forces varied throughout the war. At the beginning, the regulations in effect were those taken from the United States Army. Later on, the Confederate government formulated and issued its own regulations as the chaplaincy underwent changes. In forming a new army, the Southern forces at first confronted an ineptitude among its chaplains. Douglas Southall Freeman pointed out the scarcity of good chaplains in the Confederate forces. Having noted how the Stonewall Brigade started building log chapels, he said, "Filling the pulpits was more difficult. A diligent chaplain was the exception." He then quoted Franklin Paxton's evaluation, "Most of them are frequently away, whilst others stay at houses in the neighborhood of the camp, coming occasionally to their regiments."[9]

In addition, chaplains were in short supply in many parts of the army. In an appeal to the Churches for good chaplains during the winter of 1862-1863, General Jackson added, "The neglect of spiritual

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[8] Minutes South, 1855-1866, 300, 337, 340. On Thomas, see also Drury, The History of the Chaplain Corps, United States Navy, I, 250.

[9] Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command, 3 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), II, 431.

interests in the army may be partially seen in the fact that not half my regiments have chaplains."[10]

A growing concern for chaplains in the Confederate forces resulted in formal legislation. On April 27, 1861, L. P. Walker, Secretary of War, wrote the following to President Jefferson Davis:

> I cannot more appropriately conclude this report than by urging upon Congress the passage of a law empowering this Department to appoint chaplains for the service. Military experience demonstrates the importance of religious habitudes to the morality, good order, and general discipline in the camps or in the field. If we expect God to bless us in our struggle in defense of our rights -- to terminate in all probability, only after a protracted and bloody war -- we must recognize him in our actions.[11]

Six days later, on May 3, 1861, An Act to Provide for the Appointment of Chaplains in the Army was approved. This act provided the President with the authority to appoint as many chaplains as he deemed expedient. There were no qualifications involved in this legislation as to age, health, education or even official status as a clergyman.[12] It is no surprise that problems continued to arise within the Chaplain Corps of the Confederate forces.

In Confederate units, the men normally voted first to determine what denomination their chaplain would represent. Next, they sought an acceptable minister of that denomination and called him to serve as their chaplain. If this was agreeable, he was then

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[10] Quoted in Henry Alexander White, Stonewall Jackson (Philadelphia: George W. Jacobs Co., 1908), 321.

[11] Official Records, Ser. IV, I, 252.

[12] Ibid., Ser. IV, I, 275.

certified to the adjutant general for appointment.[13] A Methodist pastor in Florida was asked by a unit to become their chaplain. He told them in jest that he would not leave his church unless they elected him a major. To his surprise, he was made a major on the spot by the unit.[14]

This informal system for recruiting chaplains worked with surprising effectiveness at first. Early in the war, units largely came from a local part of the country. A town might raise a company of volunteers and a larger county might furnish an entire battalion. Most often, one of the local pastors would accompany a unit and serve as its chaplain.

Since Methodism was strong in the South, a large number of Southern Methodist pastors became chaplains in army units. Sweet listed 209 Confederate chaplains from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, but admitted that his list was not complete. He also listed 32 who were Army missionaries but not military chaplains.[15] Honeywell identified 210 and estimated that the actual number was about 250 for Methodist Confederate chaplains.[16] The Annual Conference

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[13] Pitts, Chaplains in Gray, 43.

[14] Brooks, From Saddlebags to Satellites, 67.

[15] Sweet, Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War, 219-23.

[16] Roy J. Honeywell, "Summary of Methodist Ministers in the Civil War, 1861-1866" (unpublished manuscript in the Methodist Commission on Chaplains Office, Washington, D. C., n.d.).

records in 1861 already showed a number of these Southern pastors who had entered the military, and by 1862, about one fifth of the preachers in the Tennessee Conference were serving as Confederate chaplains.[17]

As had been true in the North, many Southern Methodist pastors did not seek or accept commissions as chaplains. Instead, some of them simply became regular soldiers and served in various military capacities. One Confederate unit, the Ninth Arkansas, came to be known as the Parsons' Regiment because it contained 42 ordained ministers in its ranks. A Methodist preacher, Colonel Bradley, commanded the regiment.[18]

The Annual Conference records indicate the regular pastors serving as chaplains and also reflect many who are listed simply as serving in the army. One of the first Southern ministers to die as a regular soldier was Columbus W. Howard of the Georgia Conference. He had served as a soldier in the Mexican War, entered the ministry and resigned his appointment early in 1861 to command a company. He died at the Battle of Manassas in July of that same year.[19]

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17 Cullen T. Carter, History of the Tennessee Conference and a Brief Summary of the General Conferences: The Methodist Church From the Frontier in Middle Tennessee To The Present Time (Nashville: Parthenon Press, 1948), 147.

18 Pitts, Chaplains in Gray, 28.

19 Minutes South, 1855-1866, 340.

Lieutenant Colonel D. C. Kelley, a Methodist pastor, became a well known member of General Nathan Bedford Forrest's staff.[20]

The Confederate Army chaplains, unlike their Federal counterparts, did not have a prescribed uniform. One chaplain, J. H. McNeily of Quarles' Regiment, left a vivid description of his ragged uniform following the Battle of Nashville. In it he mentions "a hat of brown jeans, quilted; my jacket of gray, with wooden buttons, . . . shirt of checkered Osnaberg . . . pantaloons . . . a pair of brogans. . . ."[21] Strangely enough, the Federal chaplains in turn had no official insignia while some Confederate chaplains did. In June, 1863, chaplains in the Second and Third Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia agreed to use "the letter C, with a half wreath of olive leaves worked in gold bullion, on a ground of black velvet, the whole about 2½ inches wide."[22] Later, the same year, chaplains in the Army of Tennessee adopted the Maltese Cross as their insignia.

The Confederate chaplains fared poorly in terms of army pay. On May 3, 1861, a law passed which provided that "the monthly pay of said chaplains shall be $85.00." On May 16, 1861, a new law lowered this to a monthly figure of $50.00. Still later, on August 31, 1861, Congress allowed chaplains "the same rations as privates." In March,

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20 Pitts, Chaplains in Gray, 29.

21 Ibid., 45.

22 Religious Herald, June 25, 1863, quoted in ibid., 44.

1862, the Georgia Annual Conference of the Methodist Church petitioned Congress to raise the chaplains' salaries and this was done on April 19, 1862. The new amount was $80.40 monthly plus rations.[23] The Methodists and several other denominations in the South augmented the salaries of their army chaplains.[24]

The chaplains in the South did a more effective job in terms of organization than did their Federal counterparts. Since the Confederate chaplains lacked a clearcut directive, reports to military authorities were a matter of courtesy. Then they were given orally to their commanding officers or through meetings of the chaplain's associations. However, most chaplains usually kept personal records in the form of both a diary and a progress report. Many kept unit rosters with notations about the religious condition and status of their men.[25]

General "Stonewall" Jackson was a commander who stressed order, discipline and reporting. While he did not attend the gatherings of his chaplains, he did seek an immediate report from his own chaplain upon his return from such a meeting.[26] Jackson was a devout Christian and generously supported his chaplains and their work within his units.

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[23] Official Records, Ser. IV, I, 275, 327, 595, 1076.

[24] Pitts, Chaplains in Gray, 41; Williams, "The Chaplaincy in Historical and Ecclesiastical Perspective," 35.

[25] Pitts, Chaplains in Gray, 43, 53.

[26] White, Stonewall Jackson, 324.

The first Chaplain's Association took form on March 16, 1863, in the Stonewall Brigade of the Army of Northern Virginia.[27] General Jackson commented,

> Our chaplains, at least in the same military organization encamped in the same neighborhood, should have their meetings, and through God's blessing devise successful plans for spiritual contests. All the other departments of the army have system, and such system exists in any other department of the service that no one of its officers can neglect his duty without diminishing the efficiency of his branch of the service.[28]

The idea of Chaplain's Associations caught on and by the time General Lee surrendered at Appomattox, the Army of Northern Virginia had four corps associations, one army association and the Richmond Chaplains' Association.[29] Jackson also took the innovative step of naming an unofficial chaplain general for the Second Corps. His choice was Chaplain B. Tucker Lacy, a Presbyterian,[30] who was to exercise a general oversight of all religious work in the Second Corps.[31]

The Army of Tennessee also had Chaplains' Associations. The Association in Hindman's Corps sought to coordinate the religious

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[27] Pitts, Chaplains in Gray, 13.

[28] J. William Jones, Christ In The Camp (Richmond: B. F. Johnson & Co., 1887), 94-95, as quoted in Ibid., 57.

[29] Herman Norton, Rebel Religion: The Story of Confederate Chaplains (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1961), 106.

[30] Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, II, 431-32.

[31] White, Stonewall Jackson, 323.

efforts of the civilian clergy and military chaplains.[32] Chaplain Alexander Betts, a Methodist who at one time served with General William J. Hardee, noted how he was named to preach to some 44 chaplains in his Corps.[33]

One of several specialized ministries performed by Confederate chaplains was their service in hospitals. The authorization for the appointment of Confederate hospital chaplains did not occur until June 17, 1864. On that date the President was authorized to appoint "chaplains to battalions and to general hospitals, who shall receive the same pay and allowances now authorized by law to chaplains appointed to regiments and posts."[34] In one roster of Confederate chaplains, fifty were listed as being Hospital Chaplains, only one of whom is identified as being a Methodist.[35] However, the dates of their assignments and many of their denominations were not included on the roster.

Many of the hospitals were only temporary. During the Battle of Gettysburg, "one hundred and thirteen hospitals were in operation, besides those located in private homes."[36] Chaplains quite naturally

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32 Norton, Rebel Religion, 107.

33 Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army, 143.

34 Official Records, Ser. IV, III, 496.

35 Norton, Rebel Religion, 115-34.

36 Herbert L. Grimm and Paul L. Roy, Human Interest Stories of the Three Days' Battles at Gettysburg (Gettysburg: Time and News Publishing Co., 1969), 42.

worked closely with the surgeons in their units. They were involved with the wounded and dying in the field hospitals as well as in the permanent medical facilities. Hospital chaplains spent considerable time arranging burials and helping religious publications compile their somber death notices. In addition, they held devotions, read to patients, did some revival preaching, and added as they could to the comfort of patients.

Chaplain Nicholas Davis of the Fourth Texas Regiment accompanied the wounded from one battle back to Richmond. There, he had to establish a "wayside" hospital at the railroad depot with the help of civilian volunteers from the city. Supplies for such a hospital did not come from the government but from local church relief organizations and other sources from which the chaplain could solicit.[37] Often a chaplain was assigned to an area for hospital coverage. Such seemed to be the case with two Methodists, Chaplain F. A. Mood, Chaplain of Hospitals in Charleston, South Carolina, and Chaplain J. W. Miller of the Military Hospitals in Summerville, South Carolina.[38] Another Methodist, Chaplain Collins D. Elliott of the First Tennessee Regiment, toured Alabama in a successful effort to solicit provisions for disabled soldiers awaiting assignment to permanent hospitals.[39]

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[37] Pitts, Chaplains in Gray, 79

[38] Albert Deems Betts, History of South Carolina Methodism (Columbia: The Advocate Press, 1952), 308, 310.

[39] Norton, Rebel Religion, 89.

Another form of specialized ministry involved serving prisoners of war. Several Confederate chaplains became prisoners themselves in 1863. Their resistance continued and they received disciplinary action for trying to persuade Federal troops to desert.[40] However, ministering to prisoners was mostly done by either local clergy or in addition to their regular duties by military chaplains. Norton describes the work of two Methodist chaplains who had effective prison ministeries, John Parish of the 54th North Carolina Regiment and Francis M. Kennedy of the 28th North Carolina Regiment.[41] Others, like these men, filled in as and when they could.

A third type of specialized ministry performed by Confederate chaplains was serving as a correspondent both in terms of letter writing to families of soldiers and writing for various publications. The more serious but official family correspondence concerned the wounded and casualties. This task fell to the unit and hospital chaplains both in the North and the South. Progress reports on the wounded were made as frequently as possible. This task was important since many of the soldiers could neither read nor write. It often contained the only report a family would receive concerning how a loved one had died, last words, place of interment, and other pertinent data.

Many chaplains also wrote extensively for the public. In

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40 Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army, 99.

41 Norton, Rebel Religion, 59-60.

Lee's army, the Chaplains' Associations sent circular letters to their churches urging cooperation in their work. Other chaplains served as reporters informing the public of what was happening in the units. Other public correspondence was in the form of appeals in which the needs of soldiers for Bibles, religious literature, clothing and hospital supplies were presented.

Some chaplains were regular correspondents for various publications. The Richmond Christian Advocate was but one of many church publications which constantly published correspondence from Confederate chaplains.[42]

Finally, one specialized ministry seemed unique. Methodist Chaplain William A. Crocker of the 14th Virginia Regiment encountered great difficulty in locating his wounded troops in several Richmond hospitals. In May, 1863, he began the Army Intelligence Office which kept up with some 30,000 soldiers in hospitals with daily records as to admission, discharge, transfer and death. The office worked with a Federal counterpart in reference to their personnel in Confederate control and to Confederate soldiers under Federal control.[43]

The most impressive feature of the ministry to Confederate troops involved the sizeable impact in terms of conversion experiences, evangelistic outreach, and an almost perpetual religious revival in many Southern units. In particular this held true ~~during~~ in the

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[42] William Warren Sweet, Virginia Methodism: A History (Richmond: Whittet and Shepperson, 1955), 270-71.

[43] Norton, Rebel Religion, 94-95.

last several years of the war and, consequently, the role of the chaplain came to be deeply appreciated and respected. These revivals began in a few isolated units in 1862. While troops who wintered at Cumberland Gap in 1861-1862 were not sufficiently interested in religious services to provide shelters for them, conditions soon began to change. Following the Battle of Fredericksburg on December 18, 1862, the Confederate forces were stabilized for the most part until Chancellorsville on May 2-4, 1863. During this time, Methodist Chaplain William B. Owen of the 17th Mississippi Regiment began revivals in Fredericksburg. Within the first 30 days of this revival, 112 men made public professions of faith with another 100 identifying themselves as candidates for conversion.[44]

Revivalism began to spread and soon occurred in the brigades of Barksdale, Lawton, Walker, Paxton, Hoke, Cobb, James, Parsley, Wilson and Kershaw. In part, this resulted from the evangelistic preaching of Chaplain Joseph C. Stiles, the "unofficial chaplain general of the Confederacy," and Chaplain A. M. Marshall, formerly a private in the 12th Georgia Regiment.[45] The religious enthusiasm continued, although of necessity it lessened until the following fall after the Gettysburg campaign. During this one revival season, however, "more than 15,000 soldiers confessed their sins, 300 during a

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[44] Norton, Rebel Religion, 46-47.

[45] Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, II, 316. Dr. Stiles was seventy years old at this time! Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army, 105.

single meeting, 100 at another, 500 a week in the Army of Virginia alone."[46]

By 1863, the Southern Churches had responded to the appeals of men like Lee and Jackson for able chaplains. The number and quality of chaplains for the Confederate Army increased and many civilian efforts were reaching the soldiers. By 1864, chapels existed every six or eight hundred yards in Lee's area and the revivals and conversions there continued until the end of the war. During one holding action, continuous services were held in adjoining units along the Rappahannock River for a space of several miles as the chaplains held their meetings in the trenches and forward areas.

Dalton, Georgia, was the scene of the famous revival in the Army of Tennessee in 1863-1864, during winter quarters following the Battle of Missionary Ridge. The Rev. John B. McFerrin was appointed by the Methodists to take charge of all the Methodist missionary work in the Army of Tennessee. He worked hard and successfully in the Dalton revival where there was preaching every night but four for four months. According to his report, thousands were converted in Dalton and thousands more in the surrounding camps.[47]

Another branch of the Confederate Army was known as the Trans-Mississippi Department. In 1863, a revival began there as well under

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[46] Norton, Rebel Religion, 50.

[47] Several excerpts from his diary are quoted in Gross Alexander, A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (Vol. XI, The American Church History Series, New York: The Christian Literature Co., 1894), 71-73.

the leadership of Chaplain Enoch Mather Marvin, a Methodist pastor from Missouri. Over 2,000 conversions occurred in revivals among the soldiers at Little Rock, Camden, Camp Bragg, and Three Creeks, Arkansas.[48] Wiley quoted a soldier from still another area, Minden, Louisiana: "A revival of religion has commenced in camps; . . . over 250 have been converted since last summer in this division."[49]

The overall impact of revivalism in the Confederate forces is difficult to assess. Accurate statistics are unavailable but there was an upsurge of interest in and commitment to the Christian faith as proclaimed by pastors to the soldiers. Estimates for the total number of conversions in the military forces on both sides vary between 1,000 and 200,000.[50] Revivalism was a significant feature of religious life and ministry within the Confederate military and the Methodists played an important role in it.

Like Federal chaplains, the Confederate chaplains demonstrated an ambivalence in regard to their role as combatants. With the 18th Alabama Regiment, which fought the Third Wisconsin at Resaca when Chaplain John M. Springer fell, was Chaplain J. P. McMullen, an older Presbyterian chaplain. His son, a lieutenant, was killed at first fire, and "the old chaplain buclied (sic) on his son's sword

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48 Pitts, Chaplains in Gray, 115.

49 Bell Irvin Wiley, The Life of Johnny Reb: The Common Soldier of the Confederacy (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1943), 181.

50 Sydney E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), 677.

and led the men on a piece further when he too was killed."[51] Both chaplains served as combatants in critical situations with their respective units and died as a result of their efforts in the same battle.

The wavering of Federal policy concerning the release of chaplain prisoners in 1863 most likely resulted from news about "fighting parsons" in the Confederate forces. On August 25, 1863, the Chaplains' Associations of the Second and Third Corps in the Army of Northern Virginia discussed the issue of chaplains as combatants at length but finally concluded that each chaplain would have to make and live by his own decision.[52] Chaplains were officially classified as noncombatants in the Civil War but in reality the definition did not apply to all.

Places of worship for the Confederate soldiers varied depending on the movement of units and available materials. While moving, services were held in the open or wherever the men could assemble. Once the lines stablized, however, chapel construction often got under way. In the Army of Northern Virginia, the men of the Stonewall Brigade in General Jackson's Corps began the chapel building effort. The first of these chapels was near Jackson's headquarters and the General frequently worshiped there. This plain building had a roof of boards and seats formed by split logs.[53] Chapels of

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51 Quoted in Pitts, Chaplains in Gray, 98.

52 Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army, 98.

53 White, Stonewall Jackson, 322.

this sort were being built and used by the winter of 1861-1862, with the first log chapel being erected by men in the 17th Virginia Regiment.[54]

Methodist pastor, John B. McFerrin, in describing the revival in and around Dalton, Georgia, mentions chapel construction in the Army of Tennessee in 1863-1864. "The soldiers erected stands, improvised seats, and even built log churches, where they worshipped God in spirit and truth."[55] McFerrin also referred to the use of nearby civilian churches which was a widespread practice in both armies. Sometimes this included appropriating churches in the South for the use of Federal troops. A bowling alley near Savannah, Georgia, was converted into a chapel as were theaters and other public buildings.[56]

The number of chapels was large. Almost every brigade between the Appomattox and James Rivers had a chapel while Pickett's Division in 1864-1865 had subterranean chapels spaced at half-mile intervals on the line of encampment. Chaplain J. William Jones recalled 40 chapels built by Lee's men along the Rapidan late in 1863 and 60 more built on the Petersburg line the next year.[57] The

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[54] Norton, Rebel Religion, 45.

[55] Quoted in Alexander, History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 72.

[56] Norton, Rebel Religion, 45; Wiley, Life of Johnny Reb, 181.

[57] Norton, Rebel Religion, 46; Jones, Christ in the Camp, 250, as cited in Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army, 127.

chaplain in the Civil War benefitted when he had a physical structure in which to locate the chapel services.

The troops in Confederate units organized into several types of religious organizations as did the Federal troops. The Southern forces had basically two types of organizations for their congregations. In the eastern sector Christian Associations or Societies appeared almost spontaneously in many regiments and brigades. These provided an opportunity for public confession, Christian fellowship, and continuing Bible study. These groups both facilitated and conserved the work of chaplains. They also provided a source for lay leadership to carry on a program in the absence of the chaplain. These groups averaged about 200 members, and the first one began under the leadership of Chaplain William Haslett in the 21st Georgia Regiment.[58]

The Confederate soldier in the West had a more formally organized group which he could join, the Army Church. The Rev. Enoch M. Marvin, a popular Methodist pastor from Missouri, is variously identified as a chaplain, an Army Missionary, or an "acting chaplain" for General Sterling Price's troops in Arkansas. In March, 1863, General Price moved his headquarters to Little Rock and there the Rev. Marvin preached for several months in a Presbyterian church used by the Confederates.

Later in 1863, Marvin presided over a meeting at which he, five other Methodist pastors and three Presbyterian clergymen drew

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58 Norton, Rebel Religion, 66.

up plans for the Army Church. This organization soon spread to various regiments and was instrumental in the period of revivals in 1863-1864. The articles of faith and constitution are as follows:

> The Christian men of the army, believing that the habitation of God by his Spirit constitutes the Church, agree for their edification and for the conversion of their fellowmen, to organize the Church of the Army, with the following Articles of Faith and Constitution:
>
> Article I. We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God; the only rule of faith and obedience.
>
> Art. II. We believe in one God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.
>
> Art. III. We believe in the fall in Adam, the redemption by Christ, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.
>
> Art. IV. We believe in justification by faith alone, and therefore receive and rest upon Christ alone as our only hope.
>
> Art. V. We believe in the communion of saints and the doctrine of eternal rewards and punishments.
>
> Constitution
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> The Christian men who have been baptized, adopting these "Articles of Faith," in the regiment, shall constitute one church, who shall choose ten officers to take the spiritual oversight of the same. Of the officers so selected, the chaplains or one selected by themselves shall act as moderator. The officers will meet once a month, or oftener if necessary, and in the exercise of discipline will be governed by the teachings of Christ. They will keep a record of the names and the manner in which their ecclesiastical connection with the Church is dissolved.[59]

In addition to unit organizations such as these, other efforts reached out for people who had come from different denominations and creedal backgrounds. An ecumenical spirit prevailed in much of the religious work done in the various army units. As was true for many innovative steps affecting the chaplaincy for soldiers,

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[59] Thomas M. Finley, Life and Labors of Enoch Mather Marvin (St. Louis: James H. Chambers, 1880), 378, as quoted by May in Bucke, History of American Methodism, II, 242-43.

General "Stonewall" Jackson was a leader in developing this spirit of ecumenism.

> Denominational distinctions should be kept out of view and not touched upon; and as a general rule, I do not think that a chaplain who would preach denominational sermons, should be in the army. His congregation is his regiment, and it is composed of persons of various denominations. I would like to see no question asked in the army as to what denomination a chaplain belongs, but let the question be, "Does he preach the Gospel?"[60]

Most of the religious work in the army was interdenominational in character. Speaking of a revival service held at Fredericksburg in 1863, Chaplain J. William Jones noted, "We had a Presbyterian sermon, introduced by Baptist services, under the direction of Methodist chaplain in an Episcopal church."[61] This seemed to be the usual thing in the army. By avoiding controversial doctrines and refusing to proselytize, the army chaplains and missionaries used common ground as the basis of their message.

However, when converts presented themselves for church membership, the chaplains drew denominational lines but in a cooperative manner. Methodist Chaplain Horace Jewell worked closely with Baptist Chaplain Cochran in several services. The converts would choose which church they desired and go with the chaplain for baptism and church membership.[62] Methodists noted this harmonious relationship among

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60 Quoted in White, Stonewall Jackson, 321.

61 Jones, Christ in the Camp, 223, as quoted in Wiley, The Life of Johnny Reb, 187.

62 Pitts, Chaplains in Gray, 56-57.

denominations with approval. The Rev. Atticus G. Haygood, Methodist missionary to Bryan's Brigade, wrote,

> Anything looking like controversy should be considered an intolerable impertinence in the army. I think the unity and brotherly love among the Christians of our noble armies will, when those armies return home, effectually rebuke the intolerant bigotry that has so often reared its foul crest by the altars of God.[63]

Baptists furnished a large number of chaplains, but some Baptists still formed separate Baptist churches. This was largely due to opposition by some Baptists to having clergy work for the government.[64] Despite this, in the Georgia brigade revival "120 out of 180 converts joined the Baptist Church. . . . This revival was led by four Methodists -- and no Baptists."[65]

At least one black chaplain served with Confederate forces. This man was a devout black servant, Uncle Lewis, who accompanied a Tennessee regiment. When a regular minister could not be obtained to fill the chaplain position, Uncle Lewis was asked to conduct several services. He did these so well that the men asked him to serve as their chaplain and he did from the Battle of Shiloh to the end of the war. A newspaper account praised his efforts and he was credited

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63 Quoted in Bucke, History of American Methodism, II, 241.

64 Two Baptist groups in Texas, the Union Baptist Association and Cherokee Association, both passed resolutions in 1862 condemming the chaplaincy. Pitts, Chaplains in Gray, 45-46.

65 Norton, Rebel Religion, 35. He also lists the formation of Baptist churches in the 14th Texas Regiment, the Cherokee Regiment, Terry's Texas Rangers, and the brigades of Finley and Gibson. Ibid., 66.

with bringing the regiment to two or three seasons of revival. Pitts noted that he was "the first colored chaplain serving white troops."[66]

Bishop Hubbard Hinde Kavanaugh served during the war as a Confederate chaplain while he remained an active bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Kavanaugh was elected Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South in 1854.[67] He had been one of the signers of a statement of June 11, 1844, by the Southern delegation to the General Conference of 1844. This statement proposed a plan and rationale for forming the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Kavanaugh served later, while he was a bishop, as chaplain of the Sixth Kentucky Regiment. He maintained his residence at Versailles, Kentucky, throughout the war and was the only Southern bishop to spend considerable time outside the Confederate lines. In 1864, he presided at an Annual Conference in California. Federal officials arrested him, searched his belongings and finally released him. They had suspected that he was on a political mission.[68]

Despite the considerable efforts of Methodist leaders such as Bishop Kavanaugh, the Methodist work in general was sporatic and lacked organization as it related to military personnel. The Southern Methodists did develop more adequate structures for dealing with

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66 Chaplains in Gray, 48-49. The newspaper account was in the Religious Herald, September 10, 1863. Pitts also notes the first Indian chaplain, Unaguskie. He was the son of a Cherokee chief and a Christian who served with an Indian unit.

67 Hyde, Story of Methodism, 410.

68 Pitts, Chaplains in Gray, 91; Bucke, History of American Methodism, II, 247.

this problem than did Methodists in the North. In terms of recruitment of chaplains, Chaplain John C. Granbery of Virginia and Chaplain Joseph Cross of Kentucky were named Commissioners and utilized the central locations of their respective college campuses to recruit many Methodists pastors to serve as Confederate chaplains.[69]

In 1861, the Rev. John Christian Keener, later elected as a bishop in 1870, was named as superintendent of chaplains for the Confederate armies west of the Mississippi.[70] In early 1863, the Chaplains' Association in the Army of Virginia in conjunction with General Jackson sent an urgent appeal to the Churches to send chaplains and help with the ministry to soldiers.

Shortly afterwards, in April, 1863, the Mission Board and bishops of the Southern Church met in Macon, Georgia. In response to the appeal, they initiated plans for the Army Mission which would be operated by the Church's Missionary Society. The bishops were asked to appoint one general missionary to each Army Corps.[71] The Rev. John B. McFerrin was then appointed to be in charge of all the Methodist missionary work in the Army of Tennessee.[72] The Rev. E. M. Marvin

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[69] Granbery was the chaplain at the University of Virginia and later a Confederate chaplain. He was elected Bishop in 1882. Joseph Cross taught at Transylvania and later served as chaplain with the 2nd Tennessee Regiment. Norton, Rebel Religion, 32.

[70] Hyde, Story of Methodism, 413.

[71] Bucke, History of American Methodism, II, 236-37.

[72] Alexander, History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 71.

became the superintendent of Army Missions in Louisiana.[73] Former chaplain, John C. Granbery, is also identified as having been superintendent of Methodist missionaries in Lee's army. The Rev. E. B. Sehon, missionary secretary of the Southern Church toured the South soliciting funds and appealing for workers to assist with the Army Mission.[74] Bishop Paine also appointed the Rev. Kavanaugh, brother of the Bishop, as missionary to Price's army. Before July, 1863, he and E. M. Marvin had served as missionaries to the Confederate Army in Missouri.[75]

The involvement of the Southern Church in sending missionaries to assist chaplains in ministering to the troops was quite extensive. On October 28, 1863, the Texas Annual Conference passed the following resolution:

> Resolved, That the president of this conference be, and he is hereby requested to appoint one or more missionaries, selected from this body, to labor during the ensuing year as Army Missionaries among our armies of the Trans-Mississippi Department.[76]

A day of "fasting, humiliation and prayer for the deliverance of our country from the power of the foe, . . ." also passed and five Army

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[73] O. T. Hotchkiss, "History of the Texas Conference," in the Texas Methodist Historical Quarterly (January, 1911), II, 174.

[74] Bucke, History of American Methodism, II, 241, 237.

[75] Elliott, South-Western Methodism, 447-48.

[76] Hotchkiss, "History of the Texas Conference," 170.

Missionaries were named with the Rev. W. H. Seat as superintendent, along with four army chaplains.[77]

The following year, on November 2, 1864, the same Texas Conference named five more missionaries and four chaplains. In another action, the Conference voted $9,000 to support the Army Missions in Louisiana.[78] All this was a great sacrifice for one Annual Conference to make both in terms of personnel and resources. The deep feelings involved led to a resolution expressing appreciation to all Conference members serving with the military in any capacity.[79] Sweet listed 32 men who served as Army Missionaries from the Southern Church but this appears to be a total for only one year.[80]

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South also made an effort to serve Confederate troops with various forms of literature. Colporteurs were either clergymen or laymen whose primary function was that of distributing literature to the troops. This literature consisted of Bibles, Testaments, magazines and tracts. In March, 1862, the Confederate States Bible Society formed in Augusta, Georgia.[81] Fortunately, the American Bible Society had continued to supply

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[77] Ibid., 172-73.

[78] Ibid., 174-75.

[79] Olin W. Nail, The First Hundred Years of the Southwest Texas Conference of the Methodist Church, 1858-1958 (Austin: Capitol Printing Co., 1958), 89.

[80] Sweet, The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War, 223. The five listed from Texas are those named in October, 1863 only.

[81] Betts, History of South Carolina Methodism, 313.

Bibles and Testaments to the Confederate Army at least until this time. In addition, the British and Foreign Bible Societies donated many more Testaments.

Actually, the first Bibles published in the South came off the presses of the Southwestern Publishing House at Nashville in 1861. Plates had been smuggled from the North by a combination of Southern ingenuity and Northern friends.[82] The Methodists also co-operated closely with groups like the Evangelical Tract Society, founded in Petersburg in 1861, and published two periodicals, the Soldier's Paper, issued from Richmond for troops in Virginia and North Carolina, and the Army and Navy Herald from Macon, Georgia.[83]

The Soldier's Tract Association founded by the Southern Church began operations in March, 1862 and by that summer had ten colporteurs in the field. Later, its staff grew to twenty-five and it operated three depositories from which literature was distributed. W. W. Bennett of the Virginia Conference became general agent for the Society in 1862 and continued in that capacity until the end of the war.[84] The Rev. S. M. Cherry was central distributing agent for the Society. His report for May, 1864 to the Society tells of a great revival, ministering to the wounded and the following:

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[82] Pitts, Chaplains in Gray, 31.

[83] Sweet, Virginia Methodism, 275-76.

[84] Ibid., 276.

> Have distributed five thousand copies of the Herald, twenty thousand pages of tracts, and preached only three sermons during the month. Have made arrangements to furnish all who wish sacred literature either at Marietta or Atlanta for the present.[85]

The ministry of the printed word was effective and became a significant factor in the great spiritual awakenings.

The ministry to Confederate military personnel by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South involved many diverse efforts. The Southern Methodist chaplains as a group distinguished themselves by ably conducting religious programs suited to the needs of their troops. The support and ministry by the Church itself through civilian pastors, literature, and a generous donation of supplies meant much to the Southern forces. This Civil War period had been a time of innovation which called forth great efforts. The Southern Methodists served the military personnel well with their hastily developed but effective ministry.

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[85] Quoted in Pitts, Chaplains in Gray, 102.

EPILOGUE

When the Civil War ended, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South was in sad condition. The Annual Conferences were at best marginal in their operation, the circuit system was disorganized, many churches lacked appointed pastors, not one of the church presses was publishing, many of the educational institutions had closed down and much church property was in ruins. Indebtedness was high, financial resources were not available and church membership was declining. By contrast the Northern Methodists emerged from the war in a strong posture and their numbers and financial resources were firm. Soon after the North's victory over the South, Northern Methodists set about to reunite the two branches of American Methodism and to aid impoverished blacks. On August 6, 1866, the Methodist Episcopal Church organized the Freedmen's Aid Society, an organization which spent hundreds of thousands of dollars helping former slaves adjust to their new life of freedom. Many denominational groups, including the Methodists, combined to form the Union Aid Commission which also assisted the southern blacks.[1]

Southern Methodists resented these Northern efforts to assist the freedmen and they were equally unhappy when the Northern church attempted to seize Southern church property--as a first step toward reunification. Southern Methodists came into conflict with the Federal Army when the Northern Methodists called upon the Federal

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[1] Smeltzer, Methodism on the Headwaters of the Ohio, 240; Carpenter, Sword and Olive Branch, 95.

government to assist them in their drive to take over the church property. The Southerners often went to court after these seizures in order to regain possession of their property. A legal battle to regain physical possession of McKendree Chapel in Nashville, Tennessee, lasted for over a year, involving actions by President Lincoln and the military governor of Tennessee, Andrew Johnson.[2] Not unexpectedly, these seizures and legal battles did not bring friendly relations to the two branches of American Methodism, nor did the Southern Methodists appreciate the role of the Federal Army in the dispute.

In Alabama, a prayer issue brought local Methodist pastors and the occupying army into conflict. Prior to the Civil War, the Methodists had a public prayer for the President and all those in civil authority. During the war, this became a prayer for Confederate officials and in June, 1865, Richard Wilmer a presiding elder, recommended that the prayer be omitted. Wilmer felt that it would be a prayer for the continuance of military rule since military officials were the only civil authority in Alabama at that time. General George H. Thomas then ordered General Charles R. Woods to suspend Wilmer and prohibit from holding services those Southern Methodist clergy who followed his recommendation. After a public outcry, General Thomas revoked the order on December 22, 1865.[3]

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[2] Morrow, Northern Methodism and Reconstruction, 59.

[3] James E. Sefton, The United States Army and Reconstruction, 1865-1877 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), 57-59. For a similar incident (perhaps the same), see Farish, The Circuit Rider Dismounts, 34.

These developments in the South following the Civil War reflected a shift in relationships between the Church and the Federal government. In the instances cited, the Northern Methodists worked through government agencies and the armed forces to accomplish their goals. This was a shift from their effort during the war to minister to the military personnel themselves. Such a shift raised a number of Church-State issues which were new to the American scene. They were to be dealt with at a later time.

While the nation focused on Reconstruction, the American army was forced to shift its attention to the western part of the United States where the Indians of the great Plains were resisting the migration of white settlers. As the army returned to the task of subduing the Indians, it was also shrinking enormously in terms of manpower and money. In 1865 the Confederate forces disbanded and the Federal forces began mustering out 1,034,064 volunteers. On July 28, 1866, an act was signed into law setting the authorized strength of the American army at 54,302. However, the actual strength of the army on September 30, 1866, was only 38,540. Mutiny and desertion were frequent occurrences, understandable in the light of the low pay and hard life of a trooper on the plains. On December 1, 1870, the army had only 37,358 men stationed in the 42 states and territories at some 203 organized military posts.[4]

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[4] Ganoe, History United States Army, 300, 307, 309, 302; The Methodist Almanac, 1871, 60.

The authorized number of chaplains for the army stood at 30, and four others appointed to serve with regiments of black troops. The latter four also had the additional responsibility of teaching common school subjects to the enlisted men.[5] The chaplains achieved a great deal of success with their education programs. One chaplain, George C. Mullins, succeeded so well that he was placed in charge of education in the army in 1881. This was a new position and the educational effort he sought to coordinate and develop became an integral part of life in the army. By the end of 1881, 52 chapels, schools and reading rooms had been established at various military posts at an approximate cost of $60,000.[6] Along with the advancement of schooling, there was a growing need for reading materials. Small amounts of religious literature usually came from the U. S. Army Aid Association of New York City, the Young Men's Christian Association or, occasionally, the Military Post Library Association. Religious instruction was intermittent at best due to the small number of chaplains, the isolation of the posts, and the perpetual travel involved in pursuing the Indians.[7] Often, the army chaplains also served the nearby civilians or, in turn, civilian pastors ministered to the military units in their area. One Methodist chaplain,

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[5] Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army, 152.

[6] Jack D. Foner, The United States Soldier Between Two Wars: Army Life and Reforms, 1865-1898 (New York: Humanities Press, 1970), 28.

[7] Ibid., 29.

Alexander Gilmore, at Fort Whipple, Arizona Territory, assisted in reorganizing the Prescott Sunday School and in organizing a Presbyterian Church and two Methodist churches, one Northern and one Southern. He also traveled throughout the Territory holding extended meetings which resulted in the formation of other churches.[8]

The Methodist Churches gave little support during this time to the military in terms of chaplains. No central agency for either Methodist Church existed to handle the recruitment of pastors for the chaplaincy or to supervise their work once they began to serve in the army. Most chaplains were recruited by the army itself. When a Methodist pastor became a chaplain, he was normally dropped and separated from his conference connections. From then on, the Methodist Church fairly well ignored both him and his ministry. Exceptions occurred, but in general the Methodists were not concerned about the ministry within the military in the post-Civil War era.[9]

The United States Navy emerged from the Civil War as a considerable force with about 700 ships in service. This naval strength declined during the 1870's, but in the 1880's the navy began its development into a major naval power, and by the end of the nineteenth century, the United States was a world seapower. Throughout

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[8] Richard K. Smith,"For God, For Country, and For the Territory," 11.

[9] Anon., Chaplains of the Methodist Church in World War II, A Pictoral Record of Their Work (Washington: Methodist Commission on Chaplains, 1948), 160. The Columbia River Conference strongly supported a measure in Congress to provide chaplains for men in uniform in 1891. Howell, Methodism in the Northwest, 293.

this period, the United States Navy was authorized 24 chaplains in actual service.[10] Among this small group of chaplains, the Methodists stood out for their accomplishments. For example, a Methodist chaplain named Crawford joined the Richmond in 1880, and beginning with only a handful of Christian sailors, Crawford began a revival on board a ship noted for its moral laxity. Within a period of several months, most of the crew and many of the officers professed conversion, and even a strong temperance organization, "The Lodge of Good Templars," began. The Richmond soon became known for its piety, dedication, and religious revival. Crawford's peers considered his four-year ministry highly successful.[11]

On the whole, the chaplains in the United States Army and Navy did not carry out significant work during the years between the Civil War and the end of the nineteenth century. Army numbers were declining steadily, and while the navy was entering into a new era of size and power, the fact that the nation was not engaged in a major war kept the focus away from personnel needs, and thus away from the chaplaincy. Neither the military forces nor the churches gave more than passing notice to the chaplaincy during this inter-war period. The Spanish-American War of 1898 was so brief that the low ebb to which the military chaplaincy had fallen did not rise. The Methodist Churches and their members supported that popular war, but

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[10] Drury, History of the Chaplains Corps, United States Navy, I, 93; The Methodist Almanac, 1881, 61.

[11] Ibid., 118-19.

institutional developments for ministering to military personnel did not occur.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the United States moved into a new position as one of the world's great military powers. At the same time, the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South continued their ministry to military personnel but the form of the ministry changed. The twentieth century involvement by Methodists in the ecumenical movement altered the channels and institutional forms of support from working primarily as separate denominations to one of increasing cooperation with other religious groups. Beyond the scope of this study, that new era constituted another significant chapter in the history of the Methodist ministry to military personnel.

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